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HISTORY OF THE UNITED NETHERLANDS

FROM THE DEATH OF WILLIAM THE SILENT
TO THE TWELVE YEARS' TRUCE—1609

BY

JOHN IOTHROP MOTLEY, D.C.L., LL.D.

CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE INSTITUTE OF FRANCE, &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. I.

1880

WITH PORTRAITS



HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS
NEW YORK AND LONDON



JUAN DE LARNET, PRINCE OF PALMA.

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**HISTORY OF THE
UNITED NETHERLANDS**

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

It was in 1860 that Motley¹ gave to the public the first two volumes of *The United Netherlands*. The field represented in this significant and enduring work he had harvested very naturally and logically after the completion of his great *History of the Rise of the Dutch Republic*, published in 1856.

A glimpse of Motley's scholarly methods and indefatigable power of research is afforded in a letter from Nice, in December, 1857, when he was engrossed in the preparation of *The United Netherlands*.

In that month he wrote to his mother: "I can occupy myself for a long time with several hundredweight of books, which I have brought with me, and which I must devour and turn into chyle before I can do much in the way of writing. My time in London was not lost for a single day, and I have now two persons employed there in copying for me, according to my mapping out when personally in the State Paper Office and British Museum. I was also hard at work in the Archives in Paris during the few weeks that we were there. I have, however, much to do in the subterranean way in Brussels,

¹ John Lothrop Motley, historian and diplomatist, was born in Dorchester, Mass., April 15, 1814, graduated from Harvard in 1831, studied in Germany, was admitted to the bar in Boston, wrote two historical novels, and began his profound study of Dutch history in 1851. Five years later his *History of the Rise of the Dutch Republic* was published, which was followed by *The United Netherlands*, and in 1874 by his *John of Barneveld*. He was Minister to Austria (1861-67), and Minister to Great Britain (1869-70). He died May 29, 1877. His *Correspondence*, edited by George William Curtis, is a work of peculiar interest on account of the personal and literary associations and the historical side-lights shown in its pages.

The Hague, London, and Paris. I do not write at all as yet, but am diving deep and staying under very long, but hoping not to come up too dry. My task is a very large and hard one. My canvas is very broad, and the massing and the composition of the picture will give me more trouble than the more compact one which I have already painted."

Nearly a year later, in November, 1858, the evolution of *The United Netherlands* is sketched in a letter from Rome.

"I have a very good room for my study," he wrote, "and I am hard at work. I began my first volume about a fortnight ago and hope to have it done by April. My task is, however, rather a difficult one, more so, I think, than in my former book. I have to spread myself over a wide surface, for after the death of William the Silent the history of the provinces becomes for a time swallowed in the general current of European history. I do not mean by that that it loses its importance. On the contrary, the Netherlands question becomes the great question of Christendom. Netherlands history is for a time the only European history. France, England, Spain, and Holland being all mingled into one great conflicting mass, it is difficult to say who are friends and who are enemies, except as the dividing line is drawn according to religious opinion. I am obliged, therefore, in order to carry out my intention, to go more fully into English and French contemporaneous history than I did in the other book. This obliges me to take much greater care, because I come very often upon fields which have been more trodden before than the historical soil of the Netherlands. I have, however, made very extensive collections of MSS. in England, Holland, and France, and whatever may be the success of the merits of the volumes when done, I am sure I shall have plenty of solid work in them, and from original and substantial materials."

Other references from time to time show the zeal of the scholar and the absorption of the artist. At last the first two volumes were completed. Murray, the London pub-

lisher, who, unlike Harper & Brothers in the United States, had been unwilling to accept the *History of the Rise of the Dutch Republic*, had acknowledged his mistake, and asked to publish *The United Netherlands*. His offer was accepted. Since Motley was living abroad all this time, his *Letters* naturally dwell more at length upon the English edition than the American publication by Harper & Brothers.

In November, 1860, he wrote from London: "You will be pleased to hear that Mr. Murray had his annual trade sale dinner last Thursday (15th). This is given by him in the City to the principal London booksellers, and after a three-o'clock dinner he offers them his new publications. You will be glad to know that my volumes quite took the lead, and that he disposed at once of about three thousand copies. As he only intended to publish two thousand, you may suppose that he was agreeably disappointed. He has now increased his edition to four thousand, and expects to sell the whole. After that he will sell a smaller and cheaper edition. The work is, however, not yet published, nor will it be for several weeks. I am very glad to hear that you are pleased with the opening pages."

The following March found him at work again in the State Paper Office in London, reading hard in the old MSS. for the third and fourth volumes of the *Netherlands*.

"I am delighted to find that the success of the *United Netherlands* gives you and my father so much pleasure," he wrote in March, 1861. "It is by far the pleasantest reward for the hard work I have gone through to think that the result has given you both so much satisfaction. Not that I grudge the work, for, to say the truth, I could not exist without hard labor, and if I were compelled to be idle for the rest of my days, I should esteem it the severest affliction possible.

"My deepest regret is that my work should be for the present on the wrong side of the Atlantic. . . .

"I received a line from Tom, showing that the book was selling very well [in the United States] considering the times."

In August, 1861, Motley was notified of his appointment as Minister to Austria, and his new responsibilities, rendered doubly acute by the strain of those years of war, interrupted the course of his literary work. But in October, 1864, he wrote from Vienna: "I have been able to do a good spell of work on my History. Volume III. is done, and part of Volume IV." Then he added, with an outbreak of the patriotic feeling which characterized all his correspondence: "It seems almost like sacrilege for an American to write on any other subject than that of our own great struggle."

It was not until the close of 1866 that the *United Netherlands* was finished. Early in January, 1867, Motley wrote from Vienna to the Duchess of Argyll: "I have been, during the last few weeks, obliged to give every moment not taken up with official duties to finishing off my two concluding volumes of the *United Netherlands*. These are now in Mr. Murray's hands, and the labor of many years is brought to an end—I say it with a mingled feeling of sadness and relief."

In March he wrote to Dr. Holmes that these concluding volumes were "passing rapidly through the press."

The reception given to the completed *History of the United Netherlands*, and the permanence of the high place awarded to Motley's achievement, form an honored part of literary history. It is in recognition of the enduring interest and distinctive value of Motley's work that his publishers, who first placed his histories before American readers, have prepared this complete popular edition, in two volumes, the only authorized presentation of his great history.

P R E F A C E .

THE indulgence with which the History of the Rise of the Dutch Republic was received has encouraged me to prosecute my task with renewed industry.

A single word seems necessary to explain the somewhat increased proportions which the present work has assumed over the original design. The intimate connection which was formed between the Kingdom of England and the Republic of Holland, immediately after the death of William the Silent, rendered the history and the fate of the two commonwealths for a season almost identical. The years of anxiety and suspense during which the great Spanish project for subjugating England and reconquering the Netherlands, by the same invasion, was slowly matured, were of deepest import for the future destiny of those two countries and for the cause of national liberty. The deep-laid conspiracy of Spain and Rome against human rights deserves to be patiently examined, for it is one of the great lessons of history. The crisis was long and doubtful, and the health—perhaps the existence—of England and Holland, and, with them, of a great part of Christendom, was on the issue.

History has few so fruitful examples of the dangers which come from superstition and despotism, and the

blessings which flow from the maintenance of religious and political freedom, as those afforded by the struggle between England and Holland on the one side, and Spain and Rome on the other, during the epoch which I have attempted to describe. It is for this reason that I have thought it necessary to reveal, as minutely as possible, the secret details of this conspiracy of king and priest against the people, and to show how it was baffled at last by the strong self-helping energy of two free nations combined.

The period occupied by these two volumes is therefore a short one, when counted by years, for it begins in 1584 and ends with the commencement of 1590. When estimated by the significance of events and their results for future ages, it will perhaps be deemed worthy of the close examination which it has received. With the year 1588 the crisis was past; England was safe, and the new Dutch commonwealth was thoroughly organized. It is my design, in two additional volumes, which, with the two now published, will complete the present work, to carry the history of the Republic down to the Synod of Dort. After this epoch the Thirty Years' War broke out in Germany; and it is my wish, at a future day, to retrace the history of that eventful struggle, and to combine with it the civil and military events in Holland, down to the epoch when the Thirty Years' War and the Eighty Years' War of the Netherlands were both brought to a close by the Peace of Westphalia.

The materials for the volumes now offered to the public were so abundant that it was almost impossible

to condense them into smaller compass without doing injustice to the subject. It was desirable to throw full light on these prominent points of the history, while the law of historical perspective will allow long stretches of shadow in the succeeding portions, in which less important objects may be more slightly indicated. That I may not be thought capable of abusing the reader's confidence by inventing conversations, speeches, or letters, I would take this opportunity of stating—although I have repeated the remark in the foot-notes—that no personage in these pages is made to write or speak any words save those which, on the best historical evidence, he is known to have written or spoken.

A brief allusion to my sources of information will not seem superfluous. I have carefully studied all the leading contemporary chronicles and pamphlets of Holland, Flanders, Spain, France, Germany, and England; but, as the authorities are always indicated in the notes, it is unnecessary to give a list of them here. But by far my most valuable materials are entirely unpublished ones.

The archives of England are especially rich for the history of the sixteenth century; and it will be seen, in the course of the narrative, how largely I have drawn from those mines of historical wealth, the State Paper Office and the MS. department of the British Museum. Although both these great national depositories are in admirable order, it is to be regretted that they are not all embraced in one collection, as much trouble might then be spared to the historical student, who is now obliged to

pass frequently from the one place to the other, in order to find different portions of the same correspondence.

From the royal archives of Holland I have obtained many most important, entirely unpublished documents, by the aid of which I have endeavoured to verify, to illustrate, or sometimes to correct, the recitals of the elder national chroniclers; and I have derived the greatest profit from the invaluable series of Archives and Correspondence of the Orange-Nassau Family, given to the world by M. Groen van Prinsterer. I desire to renew to that distinguished gentleman, and to that eminent scholar M. Bakhuyzen van den Brink, the expression of my gratitude for their constant kindness and advice during my residence at the Hague. Nothing can exceed the courtesy which has been extended to me in Holland, and I am deeply grateful for the indulgence with which my efforts to illustrate the history of the country have been received where that history is best known.

I have also been much aided by the study of a portion of the Archives of Simancas, the originals of which are in the Archives de l'Empire in Paris, and which were most liberally laid before me through the kindness of M. le Comte de La Borde.

I have, further, enjoyed an inestimable advantage in the perusal of the whole correspondence between Philip II., his ministers, and governors, relating to the affairs of the Netherlands, from the epoch at which this work commences down to that monarch's death. Copies of this correspondence have been

carefully made from the originals at Simancas by order of the Belgian Government, under the superintendence of the eminent archivist M. Gachard, who has already published a synopsis or abridgment of a portion of it in a French translation. The translation and abridgment of so large a mass of papers, however, must necessarily occupy many years, and it may be long, therefore, before the whole of the correspondence—and particularly that portion of it relating to the epoch occupied by these volumes—sees the light. It was, therefore, of the greatest importance for me to see the documents themselves unabridged and untranslated. This privilege has been accorded me, and I desire to express my thanks to his Excellency M. van de Weyer, the distinguished representative of Belgium at the English Court, to whose friendly offices I am mainly indebted for the satisfaction of my wishes in this respect. A letter from him to his Excellency M. Rogier, Minister of the Interior in Belgium—who likewise took the most courteous interest in promoting my views—obtained for me the permission thoroughly to study this correspondence; and I passed several months in Brussels, occupied with reading the whole of it from the year 1584 to the end of the reign of Philip II.

I was thus saved a long visit to the Archives of Simancas, for it would be impossible conscientiously to write the history of the epoch without a thorough examination of the correspondence of the King and his ministers. I venture to hope, therefore—whatever judgment may be passed upon my own labours—that this

work may be thought to possess an intrinsic value; for the various materials of which it is composed are original, and—so far as I am aware—have not been made use of by any historical writer.

I would take this opportunity to repeat my thanks to M. Gachard, Archivist of the kingdom of Belgium, for the uniform courtesy and kindness which I have received at his hands, and to bear my testimony to the skill and critical accuracy with which he has illustrated so many passages of Belgian and Spanish history.

81, HERTFORD-STREET, MAY-FAIR,
November 11th, 1860.

HISTORY OF THE UNITED NETHERLANDS

BOOK I

THE UNITED NETHERLANDS.

CHAPTER I.

Murder of Orange—Extension of Protestantism—Vast Power of Spain—Religious Origin of the Revolt—Disposal of the Sovereignty—Courage of the Estates of Holland—Children of William the Silent—Provisional Council of State—Firm attitude of Holland and Zeeland—Weakness of Flanders—Fall of Ghent—Adroitness of Alexander Farnese.

WILLIAM THE SILENT, Prince of Orange, had been murdered on the 10th of July, 1584. It is difficult to imagine a more universal disaster than the one thus brought about by the hand of a single obscure fanatic. For nearly twenty years the character of the Prince had been expanding steadily as the difficulties of his situation increased. Habit, necessity, and the natural gifts of the man, had combined to invest him at last with an authority which seemed more than human. There was such general confidence in his sagacity, courage, and purity, that the nation had come to think with his brain and to act with his hand. It was natural that, for an instant, there should be a feeling as of absolute and helpless paralysis.

Whatever his technical attributes in the polity of the Netherlands—and it would be difficult to define them with perfect accuracy—there is no doubt that he stood there, the head of a commonwealth, in an attitude such as had been maintained by but few of the kings, or chiefs, or high priests of history. Assassination, a regular and almost indispensable portion of the working machinery of Philip's government, had produced, in this instance, after repeated disappointments, the result at last which had been so anxiously desired.

The ban of the Pope and the offered gold of the King had accomplished a victory greater than any yet achieved by the armies of Spain, brilliant as had been their triumphs on the blood-stained soil of the Netherlands.

Had that "exceeding proud, neat, and spruce"¹ Doctor of Laws, William Parry, who had been busying himself at about the same time with his memorable project against the Queen of England, proved as successful as Balthazar Gerard, the fate of Christendom would have been still darker. Fortunately, that member of Parliament had made the discovery in time—not for himself, but for Elizabeth—that the "Lord was better pleased with adverbs than nouns;"² the well-known result being that the traitor was hanged and the Sovereign saved.

Vet such was the condition of Europe at that day. A small, dull, elderly, imperfectly-educated, patient, plodding invalid, with white hair and protruding under-jaw, and dreary visage, was sitting day after day, seldom speaking, never smiling, seven or eight hours out of every twenty-four, at a writing table covered with heaps of interminable despatches, in a cabinet far away beyond the seas and mountains, in the very heart of Spain. A clerk or two, noiselessly opening and shutting the door, from time to time, fetching fresh bundles of letters and taking away others—all written and composed by secretaries or high functionaries—and all to be scrawled over in the margin by the diligent old man in a big school-boy's hand and style—if ever schoolboy, even in the sixteenth century, could write so illegibly or express himself so awkwardly;³ couriers in the court-yard arriving from or departing for the uttermost parts of earth—Asia, Africa, America, Europe—to fetch and carry these interminable epistles which contained the irresponsible commands of this one individual, and were freighted with the doom and destiny of countless millions of the world's inhabitants—such was the system of government against which the Netherlands had

¹ Camden's 'Elizabeth,' ed. 1688, p. 305.

² Camden, p. 307.

³ See vol. ii. of this work for instances.

protested and revolted. It was a system under which their fields had been made desolate, their cities burned and pillaged, their men hanged, burned, drowned, or hacked to pieces; their women subjected to every outrage; and to put an end to which they had been devoting their treasure and their blood for nearly the length of one generation. It was a system, too, which, among other results, had just brought about the death of the foremost statesman of Europe, and had nearly effected simultaneously the murder of the most eminent sovereign in the world. The industrious Philip, safe and tranquil in the depths of the Escorial, saying his prayers three times a day with exemplary regularity, had just sent three bullets through the body of William the Silent at his dining-room door in Delft. "Had it only been done two years earlier," observed the patient old man, "much trouble might have been spared me; but 'tis better late than never." Sir Edward Stafford, English envoy in Paris, wrote to his government—so soon as the news of the murder reached him—that, according to his information out of the Spanish minister's own house, "the same practice that had been executed upon the Prince of Orange, there were practisers more than two or three about to execute upon her Majesty, and that within two months." Without vouching for the absolute accuracy of this intelligence, he implored the Queen to be more upon her guard than ever. "For there is no doubt," said the envoy, "that she is a chief mark to shoot at; and seeing that there were men cunning enough to enchant a man and to encourage him to kill the Prince of Orange, in the midst of Holland, and that there was a knave found desperate enough to do it, we must think hereafter that anything may be done. Therefore God preserve her Majesty."¹

Invisible as the Grand Lama of Thibet, clothed with power

¹ Murdin's 'State Papers,' 412-415. William Herle, too, wrote from Holland, immediately after the murder, warning the Queen to be more than ever on her guard. The seminary at

Dieppe, placed "upon the brim of England," was constantly sending Scotch and English assassins into their own country. "'Tis known to me," he said, "that there are entered

as extensive and absolute as had ever been wielded by the most imperial Cæsar, Philip the Prudent, as he grew older and feebler in mind and body seemed to become more gluttonous of work,¹ more ambitious to extend his sceptre over lands which he had never seen or dreamed of seeing, more fixed in his determination to annihilate that monster Protestantism, which it had been the business of his life to combat, more eager to put to death every human creature, whether anointed monarch or humble artizan, that defended heresy or opposed his progress to universal empire.

If this enormous power, this fabulous labour, had been wielded or performed with a beneficent intention; if the man who seriously regarded himself as the owner of a third of the globe, with the inhabitants thereof, had attempted to deal with these extensive estates inherited from his ancestors with the honest intention of a thrifty landlord, an intelligent slave-owner, it would have yet been possible for a little longer to smile at the delusion, and endure the practice.

But there was another old man, who lived in another palace in another remote land, who, in his capacity of representative of Saint Peter, claimed to dispose of all the kingdoms of the earth—and had been willing to bestow them upon the man who would go down and worship him. Philip stood enfeoffed, by divine decree, of all America, the East Indies, the whole Spanish Peninsula, the better portion of Italy, the seventeen Netherlands, and many other possessions far and near; and he contemplated annexing to this extensive property the

above seven score lurking Jesuits into the realm of late, and they do secretly repair more and more to sow infection and rebellion among your subjects, and to conspire against your royal person, whom God alway, for his mercy's sake, preserve." (Herle to the Queen, 22nd July, 1584, State-Paper Office MS.) Moreover, another secret agent of Walsingham, Stephen Le Sieur, wrote shortly afterwards from Antwerp, that the Prince of Orange had been warned by persons

resident in Cologne of the attempt about to be made upon his life, but had unfortunately not heeded the admonition. The same persons who had furnished that information now wrote to apprise Le Sieur that there was a similar plot on foot against the Queen. (Le Sieur to Walsingham, 7th September, 1584, State-Paper Office MS.)

¹ Longlée au Roi de France, apud Groen van Prinsterer, 'Archives et Correspondence de la Maison d'Orange Nassau, deuxième série,' tom. i. p. 29.

kingdoms of France, of England, and Ireland. The Holy League, maintained by the sword of Guise, the pope's ban, Spanish ducats, Italian condottieri, and German mercenaries, was to exterminate heresy and establish the Spanish dominion in France. The same machinery, aided by the pistol or poniard of the assassin, was to substitute for English protestantism and England's queen the Roman Catholic religion and a foreign sovereign. "The holy league," said Duplessis-Mornay, one of the noblest characters of the age, "has destined us all to the same sacrifice. The ambition of the Spaniard, which has overleaped so many lands and seas, thinks nothing inaccessible."

The Netherland revolt had therefore assumed world-wide proportions. Had it been merely the rebellion of provinces against a sovereign, the importance of the struggle would have been more local and temporary. But the period was one in which the geographical land-marks of countries were almost removed. The dividing-line ran through every state, city, and almost every family. There was a country which believed in the absolute power of the church to dictate the relations between man and his Maker, and to utterly exterminate all who disputed that position. There was another country which protested against that doctrine, and claimed, theoretically or practically, a liberty of conscience. The territory of these countries was mapped out by no visible lines, but the inhabitants of each, whether resident in France, Germany, England, or Flanders, recognised a relationship which took its root in deeper differences than those of race or language. It was not entirely a question of doctrine or dogma. A large portion of the world had become tired of the antiquated delusion of a papal supremacy over every land, and had recorded its determination, once for all, to have done with it. The transition to freedom of conscience became a necessary step, sooner or later to be taken. To establish the principle of toleration for all religions was an inevitable consequence of the Dutch revolt; although thus far, perhaps

¹ 'Mémoires et Correspondence de Duplessis-Mornay,' Paris, 1824, iii. 27

only one conspicuous man in advance of his age had boldly announced that doctrine and had died in its defence. But a great true thought never dies—though long buried in the earth—and the day was to come, after long years, when the seed was to ripen into a harvest of civil and religious emancipation, and when the very word toleration was to sound like an insult and an absurdity.

A vast responsibility rested upon the head of a monarch, placed as Philip II. found himself, at this great dividing point in modern history. To judge him, or any man in such a position, simply from his own point of view, is weak and illogical. History judges the man according to its point of view. It condemns or applauds the point of view itself. The point of view of a malefactor is not to excuse robbery and murder. Nor is the spirit of the age to be pleaded in defence of the evil-doer at a time when mortals were divided into almost equal troops. The age of Philip II. was also the age of William of Orange and his four brethren, of Sainte Aldegonde, of Olden-Barneveldt, of Duplessis-Mornay, La Noue, Coligny, of Luther, Melancthon, and Calvin, Walsingham, Sidney, Raleigh, Queen Elizabeth, of Michael Montaigne, and William Shakspeare. It was not an age of blindness, but of glorious light. If the man whom the Maker of the Universe had permitted to be born to such boundless functions, chose to put out his own eyes that he might grope along his great pathway of duty in perpetual darkness, by his deeds he must be judged. The King perhaps firmly believed that the heretics of the Netherlands, of France, or of England, could escape eternal perdition only by being extirpated from the earth by fire and sword, and therefore, perhaps, felt it his duty to devote his life to their extermination. But he believed, still more firmly, that his own political authority, throughout his dominions, and his road to almost universal empire, lay over the bodies of those heretics. Three centuries have nearly past since this memorable epoch; and the world knows the fate of the states which accepted the dogma which it was Philip's life-work to enforce, and of those who protested

against the system. The Spanish and Italian Peninsulas have had a different history from that which records the career of France, Prussia, the Dutch Commonwealth, the British Empire, the Transatlantic Republic.

Yet the contest between those Seven meagre Provinces upon the sand-banks of the North Sea, and the great Spanish Empire, seemed at the moment with which we are now occupied a sufficiently desperate one. Throw a glance upon the map of Europe. Look at the broad magnificent Spanish Peninsula, stretching across eight degrees of latitude and ten of longitude, commanding the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, with a genial climate, warmed in winter by the vast furnace of Africa, and protected from the scorching heats of summer by shady mountain and forest, and temperate breezes from either ocean. A generous southern territory, flowing with wine and oil, and all the richest gifts of a bountiful nature—splendid cities—the new and daily expanding Madrid, rich in the trophies of the most artistic period of the modern world—Cadiz, as populous at that day as London, seated by the straits where the ancient and modern systems of traffic were blending like the mingling of the two oceans—Granada, the ancient wealthy seat of the fallen Moors—Toledo, Valladolid, and Lisbon, chief city of the recently-conquered kingdom of Portugal, counting, with its suburbs, a larger population than any city, excepting Paris, in Europe, the mother of distant colonies, and the capital of the rapidly-developing traffic with both the Indies—these were some of the treasures of Spain herself.¹ But she possessed Sicily also, the better portion of Italy, and important dependencies in Africa, while the famous maritime discoveries of the age had all enured to her aggrandizement. The world seemed suddenly to have expanded its wings from East to West, only to bear the fortunate Spanish Empire to the most dizzy heights of wealth and power. The most accomplished generals, the most disciplined and daring infantry the world has ever known, the best-equipped and most extensive navy, royal and mercantile,

Compare Guicciardini, 'Belgiæ Descript.' Amst. 1660, p. 210 seq.

of the age, were at the absolute command of the sovereign. Such was Spain.

Turn now to the north-western corner of Europe. A morsel of territory, attached by a slight sand-hook to the continent, and half-submerged by the stormy waters of the German Ocean—this was Holland. A rude climate, with long, dark, rigorous, winters, and brief summers; a territory, the mere wash of three great rivers, which had fertilized happier portions of Europe only to desolate and overwhelm this less-favoured land, a soil so ungrateful, that if the whole of its four hundred thousand acres of arable land had been sowed with grain,¹ it could not feed the labourers alone, and a population largely estimated at one million of souls—these were the characteristics of the Province which already had begun to give its name to the new commonwealth. The isles of Zeeland—entangled in the coils of deep slow-moving rivers, or combating the ocean without—and the ancient episcopate of Utrecht, formed the only other Provinces that had quite shaken off the foreign yoke. In Friesland, the important city of Groningen was still held for the King, while Bois-le-Duc, Zutphen, besides other places in Gelderland and North Brabant, also in possession of the royalists, made the position of those provinces precarious.

The limit of the Spanish or “obedient” Provinces, on the one hand, and of the United Provinces on the other, cannot, therefore, be briefly and distinctly stated. The memorable treason—or, as it was called, the “reconciliation” of the Walloon Provinces in the year 1583-4—had placed the Provinces of Hainault, Arthois, Douay, with the flourishing cities Arras, Valenciennes, Lille, Tournay, and others—all Celtic Flanders, in short—in the grasp of Spain. Cambray was still held by the French governor, Seigneur de Balagny, who had taken advantage of the Duke of Anjou’s treachery to the States, to establish himself in an unrecognized but practical petty sovereignty, in defiance both of France and Spain; while East Flanders and South Brabant still remained a dis-

¹ ‘Mémoires de Jean de Wit,’ La Haye, 1709-18-19.

puted territory, and the immediate field of contest. With these limitations, it may be assumed, for general purposes, that the territory of the United States was that of the modern Kingdom of the Netherlands, while the obedient Provinces occupied what is now the territory of Belgium.

Such, then, were the combatants in the great eighty years' war for civil and religious liberty ; sixteen of which had now passed away. On the one side, one of the most powerful and populous world-empires of history, then in the zenith of its prosperity ; on the other hand, a slender group of cities, governed by merchants and artisans, and planted precariously upon a meagre, unstable soil. A million and a half of souls against the autocrat of a third part of the known world. The contest seemed as desperate as the cause was certainly sacred ; but it had ceased to be a local contest. For the history which is to occupy us in these volumes is not exclusively the history of Holland. It is the story of the great combat between despotism, sacerdotal and regal, and the spirit of rational human liberty. The tragedy opened in the Netherlands, and its main scenes were long enacted there ; but as the ambition of Spain expanded, and as the resistance to the principle which she represented became more general, other nations were, of necessity, involved in the struggle. There came to be one country, the citizens of which were the Leaguers ; and another country, whose inhabitants were Protestants. And in this lay the distinction between freedom and absolutism. The religious question swallowed all the others. There was never a period in the early history of the Dutch revolt when the Provinces would not have returned to their obedience, could they have been assured of enjoying liberty of conscience or religious peace ; nor was there ever a single moment in Philip II.'s life in which he wavered in his fixed determination never to listen to such a claim. The quarrel was in its nature irreconcilable and eternal as the warfare between wrong and right ; and the establishment of a comparative civil liberty in Europe and America was the result of the religious war of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The struggle lasted eighty years, but the prize was worth the contest.

The object of the war between the Netherlands and Spain was not, therefore, primarily, a rebellion against established authority for the maintenance of civil rights. To preserve these rights was secondary. The first cause was religion. The Provinces had been fighting for years against the Inquisition. Had they not taken arms, the Inquisition would have been established in the Netherlands, and very probably in England, and England might have become in its turn a Province of the Spanish Empire.

The death of William the Silent produced a sudden change in the political arrangements of the liberated Netherlands. During the year 1583, the United Provinces had elected Francis, Duke of Anjou, to be Duke of Brabant and sovereign of the whole country, under certain constitutional provisions enumerated in articles of solemn compact. That compact had been grossly violated. The Duke had made a treacherous attempt to possess himself of absolute power and to seize several important cities. He had been signally defeated in Antwerp, and obliged to leave the country, covered with ignominy. The States had then consulted William of Orange as to the course to be taken in the emergency. The Prince had told them that their choice was triple. They might reconcile themselves with Spain, and abandon the contest for religious liberty which they had so long been waging; they might reconcile themselves with Anjou, notwithstanding that he had so utterly forfeited all claims to their consideration; or they might fight the matter out with Spain single-handed. The last course was, in his opinion, the most eligible one, and he was ready to sacrifice his life to its furtherance. It was, however, indispensable, should that policy be adopted, that much larger supplies should be voted than had hitherto been raised, and, in general, that a much more extensive and elevated spirit of patriotism should manifest itself than had hitherto been displayed.

It was, on the whole, decided to make a second arrange-

ment with the Duke of Anjou, Queen Elizabeth warmly urging that course. At the same time, however, that articles of agreement were drawn up for the installation of Anjou as sovereign of the United Provinces, the Prince had himself consented to accept the title of Count of Holland, under an ample constitutional charter, dictated by his own lips. Neither Anjou nor Orange lived to be inaugurated into the offices thus bestowed upon them. The Duke died at Château-Thierry on the 10th June, and the Prince was assassinated a month later at Delft.

What now was the political position of the United Provinces at this juncture? The sovereignty which had been held by the Estates, ready to be conferred respectively upon Anjou and Orange, remained in the hands of the Estates. There was no opposition to this theory. No more enlarged view of the social compact had yet been taken. The people, as such, claimed no sovereignty. Had any champion claimed it for them they would hardly have understood him. The nation dealt with facts. After abjuring Philip in 1581—an act which had been accomplished by the Estates—the same Estates in general assembly had exercised sovereign power, and had twice disposed of that sovereign power by electing a hereditary ruler. Their right and their power to do this had been disputed by none, save by the deposed monarch in Spain. Having the sovereignty to dispose of, it seemed logical that the Estates might keep it, if so inclined. They did keep it, but only in trust. While Orange lived, he might often have been elected sovereign of all the Provinces, could he have been induced to consent. After his death, the Estates retained, *ex necessitate*, the sovereignty; and it will soon be related what they intended to do with it. One thing is very certain, that neither Orange, while he lived, nor the Estates, after his death, were actuated in their policy by personal ambition. It will be seen that the first object of the Estates was to dispossess themselves of the sovereignty which had again fallen into their hands.

What were the Estates? Without, at the present moment,

any farther inquiries into that constitutional system which had been long consolidating itself, and was destined to exist upon a firmer basis for centuries longer, it will be sufficient to observe, that the great characteristic of the Netherland government was the municipality. Each Province contained a large number of cities, which were governed by a board of magistrates, varying in number from twenty to forty. This college, called the *Vroedschap* (Assembly of Sages), consisted of the most notable citizens, and was a self-electing body—a close corporation—the members being appointed for life, from the citizens at large. Whenever vacancies occurred from death or loss of citizenship, the college chose new members—sometimes immediately, sometimes by means of a double or triple selection of names, the choice of one from among which was offered to the stadtholder of the province. This functionary was appointed by the Count, as he was called, whether Duke of Bavaria or of Burgundy, Emperor, or King. After the abjuration of Philip, the governors were appointed by the Estates of each Province.

The Sage-Men chose annually a board of senators, or *schenpens*, whose functions were mainly judicial; and there were generally two, and sometimes three, burgomasters, appointed in the same way.¹ This was the popular branch of the Estates. But, besides this body of representatives, were the nobles, men of ancient lineage and large possessions, who had exercised, according to the general feudal law of Europe, high, low, and intermediate jurisdiction upon their estates, and had long been recognized as an integral part of the body politic, having the right to appear, through delegates of their order, in the provincial and in the general assemblies.

Regarded as a machine for bringing the most decided political capacities into the administration of public affairs, and for organising the most practical opposition to the system of religious tyranny, the Netherland constitution was a healthy, and, for the age, an enlightened one. The office-holders, it is obvious, were not greedy for the spoils of office;

¹ *Meteren, loc. cit.*

for it was, unfortunately, often the case that their necessary expenses in the service of the state were not defrayed. The people raised enormous contributions for carrying on the war ; but they could not afford to be extremely generous to their faithful servants.

Thus constituted was the commonwealth upon the death of William the Silent. The gloom produced by that event was tragical. Never in human history was a more poignant and universal sorrow for the death of any individual. The despair was, for a brief season, absolute ; but it was soon succeeded by more lofty sentiments. It seemed, after they had laid their hero in the tomb, as though his spirit still hovered above the nation which he had loved so well, and was inspiring it with a portion of his own energy and wisdom.¹

Even on the very day of the murder, the Estates of Holland, then sitting at Delft, passed a resolution "to maintain, the good cause, with God's help, to the uttermost, with-
out sparing gold or blood." This decree was com-
municated to Admiral de Warmont, to Count Hohenlo, to William Lewis of Nassau, and to other commanders by land and sea. At the same time, the sixteen members—for no

¹ "The people of that country," wrote Walsingham, ten days after the death of Orange, to Davison, "have hitherto shewed themselves but little amazed with the accident. Rather, the wickedness of the deed hath hardened their stomachs to hold out as long as they shall have any means of defence." ¹² July, 1584, S. P. Off. MS.

William Herie, also, a secret and most capable emissary of the English government, was visiting the cities of Holland and Zeeland at the time of the tragic occurrence. He described, in vivid colours, the courageous attitude maintained by all persons in the midst of the general gloom. "The recent death of the Prince of Orange," he wrote to Queen Elizabeth, "has created no astonishment (dismay) at all, either of the people or magistrates, by fear or division, but rather generally animated them with a great resolution

of courage and hatred engraved in them, to revenge the foulness of the fact committed on the person of the prince by the tyrant of Spain, and to defend their liberties advisedly against him and his adherents by all means that God has given them, to the uttermost portion of their substance, and the last drop of their blood." ²² July, 1584, S. P. Office MS.

In the city of Dort he was waited upon by the magistrates, and received by them with singular respect, as the known, although secret, representative of the Queen. "They repaired to me immediately," he wrote, "not as men condoling their estate, or craving courage to be instilled into them—though wanting now a head—but irritated above measure to be revenged, and to defend all their heads, so apparently sought for by the King of Spain, in murdering their head, the Prince of Orange." (Ibid.)

greater number happened to be present at the session—addressed letters to their absent colleagues, informing them of the calamity which had befallen them, summoning them at once to conference, and urging an immediate convocation of the Estates of all the Provinces in General Assembly. They also addressed strong letters of encouragement, mingled with manly condolence, upon the common affliction, to prominent military and naval commanders and civil functionaries, begging them to “bear themselves manfully and valiantly, without faltering in the least on account of the great misfortune which had occurred, or allowing themselves to be seduced by any one from the union of the States.”¹ Among these sixteen were Van Zuylen, Van Nyvelt, the Seigneur de Warmont, the Advocate of Holland, Paul Buys, Joost de Menin, and John van Olden-Barneveldt. A noble example was thus set at once to their fellow citizens by these their representatives—a manful step taken forward in the path where Orange had so long been leading.

The next movement, after the last solemn obsequies had been rendered to the Prince was to provide for the immediate wants of his family. For the man who had gone into the revolt with almost royal revenues, left his estate so embarrassed that his carpets, tapestries, household linen—nay, even his silver spoons, and the very clothes of his wardrobe—were disposed of at auction for the benefit of his creditors.² He left eleven children—a son and daughter by the first wife, a son and daughter by Anna of Saxony, six daughters by Charlotte of Bourbon, and an infant, Frederic Henry, born six months before his death. The eldest son, Philip William, had been a captive in Spain for seventeen years, having been kidnapped from school, in Leyden, in the year 1567. He

¹ ‘Van Wyn et al. Aanmerkingen op Wagenaar,’ viii. 1–5.

² His extensive estates were all deeply mortgaged, and he left absolutely no ready money. “Both Buys and Meeterk told me,” wrote Herle

to Queen Elizabeth, “that the prince had not in ready money at his death one hundred guilders, which was a note of his popularity.” ²² July, 1588, S. P. Office MS. ¹ Aug., Compare Wagenaar, viii. 12–16.

had already become so thoroughly Hispaniolized under the masterly treatment of the King and the Jesuits, that even his face had lost all resemblance to the type of his heroic family, and had acquired a sinister, gloomy, forbidding expression, most painful to contemplate. All of good that he had retained was a reverence for his father's name—a sentiment which he had manifested to an extravagant extent on a memorable occasion in Madrid, by throwing out of window, and killing on the spot, a Spanish officer who had dared to mention the great Prince with insult.

The next son was Maurice, then seventeen years of age, a handsome youth, with dark blue eyes, well-chiselled features, and full red lips, who had already manifested a courage and concentration of character beyond his years. The son of William the Silent, the grandson of Maurice of Saxony, whom he resembled in visage and character, he was summoned by every drop of blood in his veins to do life-long battle with the spirit of Spanish absolutism, and he was already girding himself for his life's work. He assumed at once for his device a fallen oak, with a young sapling springing from its root. His motto,—“Tandem fit surculus arbor,” “the twig shall yet become a tree”—was to be nobly justified by his career.¹

The remaining son, then a six months' child, was also destined to high fortunes, and to win an enduring name in his country's history. For the present he remained with his mother, the noble Louisa de Coligny, who had thus seen, at long intervals, her father and two husbands fall victims to the Spanish policy; for it is as certain that Philip knew beforehand, and testified his approbation of, the massacre of St. Bartholomew, as that he was the murderer of Orange.

The Estates of Holland implored the widowed Princess to remain in their territory, settling a liberal allowance

¹ “The Count Maurice, with whom I was, most gracious Sovereign,” said Herle, “is a gentleman of the age of seventeen years, one of great towardsness, good presence, and courage, flaxen-haired, endued with a singular

wit, and no less learned for his time. He somewhat resembles the countenance and spirit of his grandfather of the mother's side.” (Herle to the Queen, MS. just cited.) Compare Meteren, xii. 214.

upon herself and her child, and she fixed her residence at Leyden.¹

But her position was most melancholy. Married in youth to the Seigneur de Teligny, a young noble of distinguished qualities, she had soon become both a widow and an orphan in the dread night of St. Bartholomew. She had made her own escape to Switzerland; and ten years afterwards she had united herself in marriage with the Prince of Orange. At the age of thirty-two, she now found herself desolate and wretched in a foreign land, where she had never felt thoroughly at home. The widow and children of William the Silent were almost without the necessaries of life. "I hardly know," wrote the Princess to her brother-in-law, Count John, "how the children and I are to maintain ourselves according to the honour of the house. May God provide for us in his bounty, and certainly we have much need of it."² Accustomed to the more luxurious civilisation of France, she had been amused rather than annoyed, when, on her first arrival in Holland for her nuptials, she found herself making the journey from Rotterdam to Delft in an open cart without springs, instead of the well-balanced coaches to which she had been used, arriving, as might have been expected, "much bruised and shaken." Such had become the primitive simplicity of William the Silent's household.³ But on his death, in embarrassed circumstances, it was still more straightened. She had no cause either to love Leyden, for, after the assassination of her husband, a brutal preacher, Hakkius by name, had seized that opportunity for denouncing the French marriage, and the sumptuous christening of the infant in January as the deeds which had provoked the wrath of God and righteous chastisement.⁴ To remain there in her widowhood, with that six months' child, "sole pledge of her dead lord, her consolation and only pleasure,"⁵ as she pathetically expressed herself, was sufficiently painful, and she had been inclined to fix her residence in Flushing, in the edifice which

¹ Wagenaar, 'Vaderlandsche Historie,' viii. 8 *seq.*; Van Wyn op Wagenaar, viii. 5 *seq.*, 16 *seq.*

² Groen v. Prinsterer, 'Archives,' &c.

³ 2 S., i. 98.

⁴ Du Maurier, 'Mémoires,' 182.

⁵ Van Wyn op Wagenaar, viii. 19.

⁶ Groen v. Prinsterer *ubi sup.*

had belonged to her husband, as Marquis of Vere. She had been persuaded, however, to remain in Holland, although "complaining, at first, somewhat of the unkindness of the people."¹

A small well-formed woman, with delicate features, exquisite complexion, and very beautiful dark eyes, that seemed in after-years, as they looked from beneath her coif, to be dim with unshed tears; with remarkable powers of mind, angelic sweetness of disposition, a winning manner, and a gentle voice, Louisa de Coligny became soon dear to the rough Hollanders, and was ever a disinterested and valuable monitress both to her own child and to his elder brother Maurice.²

Very soon afterwards the States General established a State Council, as a provisional executive board, for the term of three months, for the Provinces of Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Friesland, and such parts of Flanders and Brabant as still remained in the Union. At the head of this body was placed young Maurice, who accepted the responsible position, after three days' deliberation. The young man had been completing his education, with a liberal allowance from Holland and Zeeland, at the University of Leyden; and such had been their tender care for the child of so many hopes, that the Estates had given particular and solemn warning, by resolution, to his governor during the previous summer, on no account to allow him to approach the sea-shore, lest he should be kidnapped by the Prince of Parma, who had then some war-vessels cruising on the coast.³

The salary of Maurice was now fixed at thirty thousand

¹ MS. letter of Herle.

² "I visited the Princess of Orange by her own request," said Herle, a few days after the death of the Prince, "and found her in a most dark melancholic little chamber. 'T was a twice sorrowful sight to behold her heaviness and apparel augmented by the woefulness of the place; and truly the perplexity was great that I found her in; not only for the consideration of things past, but for that which might

follow hereafter, her afflictions having been great. She was accompanied by the Princess Chimay, who was newly come to Delft, and no less dolorous in another degree than she, but truly a virtuous and wise lady, whatsoever, under correction, hath been otherwise interpreted of her." (Herle's MS., before cited.)

³ 'Resol. Holl.,' 11th August, 1584. bl. 294; Wagenaar, viii. 6.

florins a year, while each of the councillors was allowed fifteen hundred annually, out of which stipend he was to support at least one servant, without making any claim for travelling or other incidental expenses.¹

The Council consisted of three members from Brabant, two from Flanders, four from Holland, three from Zeeland, two from Utrecht, one from Mechlin, and three from Friesland—eighteen in all. They were empowered and enjoined to levy troops by land and sea, and to appoint naval and military officers ; to establish courts of admiralty, to expend the moneys voted by the States, to maintain the ancient privileges of the country, and to see that all troops in service of the Provinces made oath of fidelity to the Union. Diplomatic relations, questions of peace and war, the treaty-making power, were not entrusted to the Council, without the knowledge and consent of the States General, which body was to be convoked twice a year by the State Council.²

Thus the Provinces in the hour of danger and darkness were true to themselves, and were far from giving way to a despondency which under the circumstances would not have been unnatural.

For the waves of bitterness were rolling far and wide around them. A medal, struck in Holland at this period, represented a dismayed hulk reeling through the tempest. The motto, "*incertum quo fata ferent*" (who knows whither fate is sweeping her?) expressed most vividly the shipwrecked condition of the country. Alexander of Parma, the most accomplished general and one of the most adroit statesmen of the age, was swift to take advantage of the calamity which had now befallen the rebellious Provinces. Had he been better provided with men and money, the cause of the States might have seemed hopeless. He addressed many letters to the States General, to the magistracies of various cities, and to individuals, affecting to consider that with the death of Orange had died all authority, as well as all motive for continuing the contest with Spain. He offered

¹ Wagenaar, viii. 8 ; Van Wyn op Wagenaar, viii. 12.

² Ibid.

easy terms of reconciliation with the discarded monarch—always reserving, however, as a matter of course, the religious question—for it was as well known to the States as to Parma that there was no hope of Philip making concessions upon that important point.

In Holland and Zeeland the Prince's blandishments were of no avail. His letters received in various towns of those Provinces, offered, said one who saw them, "almost everything they would have or demand, even till they should repent."¹ But the bait was not taken. Individuals and municipalities were alike staunch, remembering well that faith was not to be kept with heretics. The example was followed by the Estates of other Provinces, and all sent in to the General Assembly, soon in session at Delft, "their absolute and irrevocable authority to their deputies to stand to that which they, the said States General, should dispose of as to their persons, goods and country; a resolution and agreement which never concurred before among them, to this day, in what age or government soever."²

It was decreed that no motion of agreement "with the tyrant of Spain" should be entertained either publicly or privately, "under pain to be reputed ill patriots." It was also enacted in the city of Dort that any man that brought letter or message from the enemy to any private person "should be forthwith hanged." This was expeditious and business-like. The same city likewise took the lead in recording its determination by public act, and proclaiming it by sound of trumpet, "to live and die in the cause now undertaken."³

In Flanders and Brabant the spirit was less noble. Those Provinces were nearly lost already. Bruges seconded Parma's efforts to induce its sister-city Ghent to imitate its own baseness in surrendering without a struggle; and that powerful, turbulent, but most anarchical little commonwealth was but too ready to listen to the voice of the tempter. "The ducats of Spain, Madam, are trotting about in such fashion," wrote envoy Des Pruneaux to Catharine de' Medici, "that they have

¹ Herle to the Queen, MS. before cited.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

vanquished a great quantity of courages. Your Majesties, too, must employ money if you wish to advance one step."¹ No man knew better than Parma how to employ such golden rhetoric to win back a wavering rebel to his loyalty, but he was not always provided with a sufficient store of those practical arguments.

He was, moreover, not strong in the field, although he was far superior to the States at this contingency. He had, besides his garrisons, something above 18,000 men. The Provinces had hardly 3000 foot and 2500 horse, and these were mostly lying in the neighbourhood of Zutphen.² Alexander was threatening at the same time Ghent, Dendermonde, Mechlin, Brussels, and Antwerp. These five powerful cities lie in a narrow circle, at distances varying from six miles to thirty, and are, as it were, strung together upon the Scheldt, by which river, or its tributary, the Senne, they are all threaded. It would have been impossible for Parma, with 100,000 men at his back, to undertake a regular and simultaneous siege of these important places. His purpose was to isolate them from each other and from the rest of the country, by obtaining the control of the great river, and so to reduce them by famine. The scheme was a masterly one, but even the consummate ability of Farnese would have proved inadequate to the undertaking, had not the preliminary assassination of Orange made the task comparatively easy. Treason, faint-heartedness, jealousy, were the fatal allies that the Governor-General had reckoned upon, and with reason, in the council-rooms of these cities. The terms he offered were liberal. Pardon, permission for soldiers to retreat with technical honour, liberty to choose between apostacy to the reformed religion or exile, with a period of two years granted to the conscientious for the winding up of their affairs; these were the conditions, which seemed flattering, now that the well-known voice which had so often silenced the Flemish palterers and intriguers was for ever hushed.

17th Aug., Upon the 17th August Dendermonde surrendered, and no lives were taken save those of two

¹ Groen v. Prinsterer, 'Archives,' &c., 4.

² Wagenaar, viii. 13.

preachers, one of whom was hanged, while the other was drowned. Upon the 7th September Vilvoorde capitulated, by which event the water-communication between Brussels and Antwerp was cut off. Ghent, now thoroughly disheartened, treated with Parma likewise; and upon the 17th September made its reconciliation with the King.¹ The surrender of so strong and important a place was as disastrous to the cause of the patriots as it was disgraceful to the citizens themselves. It was, however, the result of an intrigue which had been long spinning, although the thread had been abruptly, and, as it was hoped, conclusively, severed several months before. During the early part of the year, after the reconciliation of Bruges with the King—an event brought about by the duplicity and adroitness of Prince Chimay—the same machinery had been diligently and almost successfully employed to produce a like result in Ghent. Champagny, brother of the famous Cardinal Granvelle, had been under arrest for six years in that city. His imprisonment was not a strict one however, and he avenged himself for what he considered very unjust treatment at the hands of the patriots, by completely abandoning a cause which he had once begun to favour. A man of singular ability, courage, and energy, distinguished both for military and diplomatic services, he was a formidable enemy to the party from which he was now for ever estranged. As early as April of this year, secret emissaries of Parma, dealing with Champagny in his nominal prison, and with the disaffected burghers at large, had been on the point of effecting an arrangement with the royal governor. The negotiation had been suddenly brought to a close by the discovery of a flagrant attempt by Imbize, one of the secret adherents of the King, to sell the city of Den-dermonde, of which he was governor, to Parma.² For this crime he had been brought to Ghent for trial, and then publicly beheaded. The incident came in aid of the eloquence of Orange, who, up to the latest moment of his life, had been

¹ Meteren, xii. 216, 217.

² See 'Rise of the Dutch Republic,' vol. ii. chap. vi., and the authorities

there cited; Everhard van Reydt, 'Historie der Nederlandscher Oorlogen,' ed. 1650; iii. 47.

most urgent in his appeals to the patriotic hearts of Ghent, not to abandon the great cause of the union and of liberty. William the Silent knew full well, that after the withdrawal of the great keystone-city of Ghent, the chasm between the Celtic-Catholic and the Flemish-Calvinist Netherlands could hardly be bridged again. Orange was now dead. The negotiations with France, too, on which those of the Ghenters who still held true to the national cause had fastened their hopes, had previously been brought to a stand-still by the death of Anjou; and Champagne, notwithstanding the disaster to Imbize, became more active than ever. A private agent, whom the municipal government had despatched to the French court for assistance, was not more successful than his character and course of conduct would have seemed to warrant; for during his residence in Paris, he had been always drunk, and generally abusive. This was not good diplomacy, particularly on the part of an agent from a weak municipality to a haughty and most undecided government.

"They found at this court," wrote Stafford to Walsingham, "great fault with his manner of dealing that was sent from Gaunt. He was scarce sober from one end of the week to the other, and stood so much on his tiptoes to have present answer within three days, or else that they of Gaunt *could tell where* to bestow themselves. They sent him away after keeping him three weeks, and he went off in great dudgeon, swearing by yea and nay that he will make report thereafter."¹

Accordingly, they of Ghent did bestow themselves very soon thereafter upon the King of Spain. The terms were considered liberal, but there was, of course, no thought of conceding the great object for which the patriots were contending—religious liberty. The municipal privileges—such as they might prove to be worth under the interpretation of a royal governor and beneath the guns of a citadel filled with Spanish troops—were to be guaranteed; those of the inhabitants who did not choose to go to mass were allowed two years to wind up their affairs before going into perpetual

¹ Stafford to Walsingham, 27th July, 1584, in Murdin, ii. pp. 412-415.

exile, provided they behaved themselves "without scandal;" while on the other hand, the King's authority as Count of Flanders was to be fully recognised, and all the dispossessed monks and abbots to be restored to their property.¹

Accordingly, Champagny was rewarded for his exertions by being released from prison and receiving the appointment of governor of the city: and, after a very brief interval, about one-half of the population, the most enterprising of its merchants and manufacturers, the most industrious of its artizans, emigrated to Holland and Zeeland.² The noble city of Ghent—then as large as Paris, thoroughly surrounded with moats, and fortified with bulwarks, ravelins, and counterscarps, constructed of earth, during the previous two years, at great expense, and provided with bread and meat, powder and shot, enough to last a year—was ignominiously surrendered. The population, already a very reduced and slender one for the great extent of the place and its former importance, had been estimated at 70,000.³ The number of houses was 35,000, so that as the inhabitants were soon farther reduced to one-half, there remained but one individual to each house. On the other hand, the twenty-five monasteries and convents in the town were repeopled—with how much advantage as a set-off to the thousands of spinners and weavers who had wandered away, and who in the flourishing days of Ghent had sent gangs of workmen through the streets "whose tramp was like that of an army"—may be sufficiently estimated by the result.

The fall of Brussels was deferred till March, and that of Mechlin (19th July, 1585) and of Antwerp (19th August, 1585), till Midsummer of the following year; but ^{10th March,} the surrender of Ghent foreshadowed the fate of ^{1585.} Flanders and Brabant. Ostend and Sluys, however, were still in the hands of the patriots, and with them the control of the whole Flemish coast. The command of the sea was destined to remain for centuries with the new republic.

¹ Meteren, xii. 217; V. Reyd, iii. 47; Le Petit, 'Grande Chronique de Hollande,' ed. 1601, xiv. 409, 500.

² Meteren, *ubi sup.*

³ Guicciardini, p. 207.

The Prince of Parma, thus encouraged by the great success of his intrigues, was determined to achieve still greater triumphs with his arms, and steadily proceeded with his large design of closing the Scheldt and bringing about the fall of Antwerp. The details of that siege—one of the most brilliant military operations of the age and one of the most memorable in its results—will be given, as a connected whole, in a subsequent series of chapters. For the present, it will be better for the reader who wishes a clear view of European politics at this epoch, and of the position of the Netherlands, to give his attention to the web of diplomatic negotiation and court-intrigue which had been slowly spreading over the leading states of Christendom, and in which the fate of the world was involved. If diplomatic adroitness consists mainly in the power to deceive, never were more adroit diplomatists than those of the sixteenth century. It would, however, be absurd to deny them a various range of abilities; and the history of no other age can show more subtle, comprehensive, indefatigable—but, it must also be added, often unscrupulous—intellects engaged in the great game of politics in which the highest interests of millions were the stakes, than were those of several leading minds in England, France, Germany, and Spain. With such statesmen the burgher-diplomatists of the new-born commonwealth had to measure themselves; and the result was to show whether or not they could hold their own in the cabinet as on the field.

For the present, however, the new state was unconscious of its latent importance. The new-risen republic remained for a season nebulous, and ready to unsphere itself so soon as the relative attraction of other great powers should determine its absorption. By the death of Anjou and of Orange the United Netherlands had become a sovereign state, an independent republic; but they stood with that sovereignty in their hands, offering it alternately, not to the highest bidder, but to the power that would be willing to accept their allegiance, on the sole condition of assisting them in the maintenance of their religious freedom.

CHAPTER II.

Relations of the Republic to France—Queen's Severity towards Catholics and Calvinists—Relative Positions of England and France—Timidity of Germany—Apathy of Protestant Germany—Indignation of the Netherlands—Henry III. of France—The King and his Minions—Henry of Guise—Henry of Navarre—Power of France—Embassy of the States to France—Ignominious position of the Envoys—Views of the French Huguenots—Efforts to procure Annexation—Success of Des Pruneaux.

THE Prince of Orange had always favoured a French policy. He had ever felt a stronger reliance upon the support of France than upon that of any other power. This was not unreasonable, and so long as he lived, the tendency of the Netherlands had been in that direction. It had never been the wish of England to acquire the sovereignty of the Provinces. In France on the contrary, the Queen Dowager, Catharine de' Medici, had always coveted that sovereignty for her darling Francis of Alençon; and the design had been favoured, so far as any policy could be favoured, by the impotent monarch who occupied the French throne.

The religion of the United Netherlands was Calvinistic. There were also many Anabaptists in the country. The Queen of England hated Anabaptists, Calvinists, and other sectarians, and banished them from her realms on pain of imprisonment and confiscation of property.¹ As firmly opposed as was her father to the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, she felt much of the paternal reluctance to accept the spirit of the Reformation. Henry Tudor hanged the men who believed in the Pope, and burnt alive those who disbelieved in transubstantiation, auricular confession, and the other 'Six Articles.' His daughter, whatever her secret religious convictions, was staunch in her resistance to Rome,

¹ Camden, i. 48.

and too enlightened a monarch not to see wherein the greatness and glory of England were to be found ; but she had no thought of tolerating liberty of conscience. All opposed to the Church of England, whether Papists or Puritans, were denounced as heretics, and as such imprisoned or banished. "To allow churches with contrary rites and ceremonies," said Elizabeth, "were nothing else but to sow religion out of religion, to distract good men's minds, to cherish factious men's humours, to disturb religion and commonwealth, and mingle divine and human things ; which were a thing in deed evil, in example worst of all ; to our own subjects hurtful, and to themselves to whom it is granted, neither greatly commodious, nor yet at all safe." The words were addressed, it is true, to Papists, but there is very little doubt that Anabaptists or any other heretics would have received a similar reply, had they, too, ventured to demand the right of public worship. It may even be said that the Romanists in the earlier days of Elizabeth's reign fared better than the Calvinists. The Queen neither banished nor imprisoned the Catholics. She did not enter their houses to disturb their private religious ceremonies, or to inquire into their consciences. This was milder treatment than the burning alive, burying alive, hanging, and drowning, which had been dealt out to the English and the Netherland heretics by Philip and by Mary, but it was not the spirit which William the Silent had been wont to manifest in his measures towards Anabaptists and Papists alike. Moreover, the Prince could hardly forget that of the nine thousand four hundred Catholic ecclesiastics who held benefices at the death of Queen Mary, all had renounced the Pope on the accession of Queen Elizabeth, and acknowledged her as the head of the church, saving only one hundred and eighty-nine individuals.¹ In the hearts of the nine thousand two hundred and eleven others, it might be thought perhaps that some tenderness for the religion from which they had so suddenly been converted, might linger, while it could hardly be hoped that they would seek to incul-

¹ Camden, i. 32.² Ibid., i. 28.

cate in the minds of their flocks or of their sovereign any connivance with the doctrines of Geneva.

When, at a later period, the plotting of Catholics, suborned by the Pope and Philip, against the throne and person of the Queen, made more rigorous measures necessary ; when it was thought indispensable to execute as traitors those Roman seedlings—seminary priests and their disciples—who went about preaching to the Queen's subjects the duty of carrying out the bull by which the Bishop of Rome had deposed and excommunicated their sovereign, and that "it was a meritorious act to kill such princes as were excommunicate,"¹ even then, the men who preached and practised treason and murder experienced no severer treatment than that which other "heretics" had met with at the Queen's hands. Jesuits and Popish priests were, by Act of Parliament, ordered to depart the realm within forty days.² Those who should afterwards return to the kingdom were to be held guilty of high treason. Students in the foreign seminaries were commanded to return within six months and recant, or be held guilty of high treason. Parents and guardians supplying money to such students abroad were to incur the penalty of a *præmunire*—perpetual exile, namely, with loss of all their goods.

Many seminary priests and others were annually executed in England under these laws, throughout the Queen's reign, but nominally at least they were hanged not as Papists, but as traitors ; not because they taught transubstantiation, ecclesiastical celibacy, auricular confession, or even Papal supremacy, but because they taught treason and murder—because they preached the necessity of killing the Queen. It was not so easy, however, to defend or even comprehend the banishment and imprisonment of those who without conspiring against the Queen's life or throne, desired to see the Church of England reformed according to the Church of Geneva. Yet there is no doubt that many sectaries experienced much inhuman treatment for such delinquency, both in the early and the later years of Elizabeth's reign.⁴

¹ Camden, iii. 336.

² Ibid, iii. 309.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid. 107, 469.

There was another consideration, which had its due weight in this balance, and that was the respective succession to the throne in the two kingdoms of France and England. Mary Stuart, the Catholic, the niece of the Guises, emblem and exponent of all that was most Roman in Europe, the sworn friend of Philip, the mortal foe to all heresy, was the legitimate successor to Elizabeth. Although that sovereign had ever refused to recognize that claim; holding that to confirm Mary in the succession was to "lay her own winding sheet before her eyes, yea, to make her own grave, while she liveth and looketh on;"¹ and although the unfortunate claimant of two thrones was a prisoner in her enemy's hands, yet, so long as she lived, there was little security for Protestantism, even in Elizabeth's lifetime, and less still in case of her sudden death. On the other hand, not only were the various politico-religious forces of France kept in equilibrium by their action upon each other—so that it was reasonable to believe that the House of Valois, however Catholic itself, would be always compelled by the fast-expanding strength of French Calvinism, to observe faithfully a compact to tolerate the Netherland churches—but, upon the death of Henry III. the crown would be legitimately placed upon the head of the great champion and chief of the Huguenots, Henry of Navarre.

It was not unnatural, therefore, that the Prince of Orange, a Calvinist himself, should expect more sympathy with the Netherland reformers in France than in England. A large proportion of the population of that kingdom, including an influential part of the nobility, was of the Huguenot persuasion, and the religious peace, established by royal edict, had endured so long, that the reformers of France and the Netherlands had begun to believe in the royal clemency, and to confide in the royal word. Orange did not live to see the actual formation of the Holy League, and could only guess at its secrets.

Moreover, it should be remembered that France at that day was a more formidable state than England, a more

¹ Camden, i. 54.

dangerous enemy, and, as it was believed, a more efficient protector. The England of the period, glorious as it was for its own and all future ages, was not the great British Empire of to-day. On the contrary, it was what would now be considered, statistically speaking, a rather petty power. The England of Elizabeth, Walsingham, Burghley, Drake, and Raleigh, of Spenser and Shakspeare, hardly numbered a larger population than now dwells in its capital and immediate suburbs. It had neither standing army nor considerable royal navy. It was full of conspirators, daring and unscrupulous, loyal to none save to Mary of Scotland, Philip of Spain, and the Pope of Rome, and untiring in their efforts to bring about a general rebellion. With Ireland at its side, nominally a subject province, but in a state of chronic insurrection—a perpetual hot-bed for Spanish conspiracy and stratagem; with Scotland at its back, a foreign country, with half its population exasperated enemies of England, and the rest but doubtful friends, and with the legitimate sovereign of that country, “the daughter of debate, who discord still did sow,”¹ a prisoner in Elizabeth’s hands, the central point around which treason was constantly crystallizing itself,—it was not strange that with the known views of the Queen on the subject of the reformed Dutch religion, England should seem less desirable as a protector for the Netherlands than the neighbouring kingdom of France.

Elizabeth was a great sovereign, whose genius Orange always appreciated, in a comparatively feeble realm. Henry of Valois was the contemptible monarch of a powerful state, and might be led by others to produce incalculable mischief or considerable good. Notwithstanding the massacre of St. Bartholomew, therefore, and the more recent “French fury” of Antwerp, Orange had been willing to countenance fresh negotiations with France.

Elizabeth, too, it should never be forgotten, was, if not over generous, at least consistent and loyal in her policy towards the Provinces. She was not precisely jealous of France, as

¹ Sonnet by Queen Elizabeth.

has been unjustly intimated on distinguished authority,¹ for she strongly advocated the renewed offer of the sovereignty to Anjou, after his memorable expulsion from the Provinces.² At that period, moreover, not only her own love-coquetries with Anjou were over, but he was endeavouring with all his might, though in secret, to make a match with the younger Infanta of Spain.³ Elizabeth furthered the negotiation with France, both publicly and privately. It will soon be narrated how those negotiations prospered.

If then England were out of the question, where, except in France, should the Netherlanders, not deeming themselves capable of standing alone, seek for protection and support?

We have seen the extensive and almost ubiquitous power of Spain. Where she did not command as sovereign, she was almost equally formidable as an ally. The Emperor of Germany was the nephew and the brother-in-law of Philip, and a strict Catholic besides. Little aid was to be expected from him or the lands under his control for the cause of the Netherland revolt. Rudolph hated his brother-in-law, but lived in mortal fear of him. He was also in perpetual dread of the Grand Turk. That formidable potentate, not then the "sick man" whose precarious condition and territorial inheritance cause so much anxiety in modern days, was, it is true, sufficiently occupied for the moment in Persia, and had been sustaining there a series of sanguinary defeats. He was all the more anxious to remain upon good terms with Philip, and had recently sent him a complimentary embassy, together with some rather choice presents, among which were "four lions, twelve unicorns, and two horses coloured white, black, and blue."⁴ Notwithstanding these pacific manifesta-

¹ 'H. Grotii Annalium,' v. 126, ed. 1658, Amst.

² 'Rise of the Dutch Republic,' iii. chap. vi., and MS. Letter of Queen Elizabeth, cited in note.

³ 'Collection de Lettres relatives aux Negotiations sur le Project de Mariage du Duc d'Anjou avec une des Infantes d'Espagne, et aux Affaires

traitées de part et d'autre pour les Pays Bas, Cambray, la succession de Portugal,' &c. Bib. Imp. de France, Brienne MS.

⁴ De Thou, 'Hist. Univ.' ix. 209 seq.

⁵ Meteren, xiii. 233; Le Pelt, xiv. 515.

tions towards the West, however, and in spite of the truce with the German Empire which the Turk had just renewed for nine years,—Rudolph and his servants still trembled at every report from the East.

“He is much deceived,” wrote Busbecq, Rudolph’s ambassador in Paris, “who doubts that the Turk has sought any thing by this long Persian war, but to protect his back, and prepare the way, after subduing that enemy, to the extermination of all Christendom, and that he will then, with all his might, wage an unequal warfare with us, in which the existence of the Empire will be at stake.”¹

The envoy expressed, at the same period, however, still greater awe of Spain. “It is to no one,” he wrote, “endowed with good judgment, in the least obscure, that the Spanish nation, greedy of empire, will never be quiet, even with their great power, but will seek for the dominion of the rest of Christendom. How much remains beyond what they have already acquired? Afterwards, there will soon be no liberty, no dignity, for other princes and republics. That single nation will be arbiter of all things, than which nothing can be more miserable, nothing more degrading. It cannot be doubted that all kings, princes, and states, whose safety or dignity is dear to them, would willingly associate in arms to extinguish the common conflagration. The death of the Catholic king would seem the great opportunity *miscendis rebus*.”²

Unfortunately neither Busbecq’s master nor any other king or prince manifested any of this commendable alacrity to “take up arms against the conflagration.” Germany was in a shiver at every breeze from East or West—trembling alike before Philip and Amurath. The Papists were making rapid progress, the land being undermined by the steady and stealthy encroachments of the Jesuits. Lord Burghley sent many copies of his pamphlet, in Latin, French, and Italian, against the Seminaries, to Gebhard Truchsess; and the de-

¹ ‘Busbecqui Epistolæ ad Rudolphum II,’ Brux., 1631, p. 152-3.

² Ibid., p. 124-126.

posed archbishop made himself busy in translating that wholesome production into German, and in dispersing it "all Germany over." The work, setting duly forth "that the executions of priests in England were not for religion but for treason," was "marvellously liked" in the Netherlands. "In uttering the truth," said Herle, "'tis likely to do great good ;" and he added, that Duke Augustus of Saxony "did now see so far into the sect of Jesuits, and to their inward mischiefs, as to become their open enemy, and to make friends against them in the Empire."¹

The love of Truchsess for Agnes Mansfeld had created disaster not only for himself but for Germany. The whole electorate of Cologne had become the constant seat of partisan warfare, and the resort of organised bands of brigands. Villages were burned and rifled, highways infested, cities threatened, and the whole country subjected to perpetual black mail (*brandschatzung*)—fire-insurance levied by the incendiaries in person—by the supporters of the rival bishops. Truchsess had fled to Delft, where he had been countenanced and supported by Orange. Two cities still held for him, Rheinberg and Neuss. On the other hand, his rival, Ernest of Bavaria, supported by Philip II., and the occasional guest, of Alexander of Parma, had not yet succeeded in establishing a strong foothold in the territory. Two pauper archbishops, without men or means of their own, were thus pushed forward and back, like puppets, by the contending highwaymen on either side ; while robbery and murder, under the name of Protestantism or Catholicism, were for a time the only motive or result of the contest.

Thus along the Rhine, as well as the Maas and the Scheldt, the fires of civil war were ever burning. Deeper within the heart of Germany, there was more tranquillity ; but it was the tranquillity rather of paralysis than of health. A fearful account was slowly accumulating, which was evidently to be settled only by one of the most horrible wars which history has ever recorded. Meantime there was apathy where there

¹ Herle to Queen Elizabeth, 22nd July, 1584, MS. before cited.

should have been enthusiasm ; parsimony and cowardice where generous and combined effort were more necessary than ever ; sloth without security. The Protestant princes, growing fat and contented on the spoils of the church, lent but a deaf ear to the moans of Truchsess, forgetting that their neighbour's blazing roof was likely soon to fire their own. "They understand better, *proximus sum egomet mihi*," wrote Lord Willoughby from Kronenburg, "than they have learned, *humani nihil a me alienum puto*. These German princes continue still in their lethargy, careless of the state of others, and dreaming of their ubiquity, and some of them, it is thought, inclining to be Spanish or Popish more of late than heretofore."¹

The beggared archbishop, more forlorn than ever since the death of his great patron, cried woe from his resting-place in Delft, upon Protestant Germany. His tones seemed almost prophetic of the thirty years' wrath to blaze forth in the next generation. "Courage is wanting to the people throughout Germany," he wrote to William Lewis of Nassau. "We are becoming the laughing-stock of the nations. Make sheep of yourselves, and the wolf will eat you. We shall find our destruction in our immoderate desire for peace. Spain is making a Papistical league in Germany. Therefore is Assonleville despatched thither, and that's the reason why our trash of priests are so insolent in the empire. 'Tis astonishing how they are triumphing on all sides. God will smite them. Thou dear God ! What are our evangelists about in Germany ? Asleep on both ears. Dormiunt in utramque aurem. I doubt they will be suddenly enough awakened one day, and the cry will be, 'Who'd have thought it ?' Then they will be for getting oil for the lamp, for shutting the stable-door when the steed is stolen,"² and so on, with a string of homely proverbs worthy of Sancho Panza, or landgrave William of Hesse.³

¹ Willoughby to Burghley, in Wright's 'Queen Elizabeth and her Times,' vol. ii. 275.

² Groen v. Prinsterer, 'Archives &c., i. 9.

³ The statesmen of England were

In truth, one of the most painful features in the general aspect of affairs was the coldness of the German Protestants towards the Netherlands. The enmity between Lutherans and Calvinists was almost as fatal as that between Protestants and Papists. There was even a talk, at a little later period, of excluding those of the "reformed" church from the benefits

too sagacious not to see the importance to Protestant Germany of sustaining the ex-electeur, if to sustain him were possible. But to this end it was necessary that the German princes, whom it most nearly concerned, should unite in his support. Queen Elizabeth had authorized a subsidy to enable Truchsess to carry on the war; but his Bavarian competitor was backed by the power of Spain, and was himself of higher rank and larger resources.

"No man," wrote Walsingham to Davison, "wishes better success than myself to the elector, knowing how greatly it importeth the common cause of religion that he should be upholden, and the benefit that those distressed countries, where you now are, may receive by way of diversion through his employment; for that Spain, and his minister the Prince of Parma, must not see the Bishop of Liege quail. Yet when I consider, upon view of the report of the conference between you and the said elector, how little appearance is of any great assistance that we shall have, and that the prince-electors whom the cause doth touch, especially Saxony and Brandenburg, have as yet no disposition to deal therein, *as though the conservation of the liberty of Germany did in no respect touch them*, I see no great reason to hope that this enterprize will be accompanied with that good success that both I wish and is also looked for here." (30th Dec., 1584. S. P. Office MS.)

It was therefore necessary, in the opinion of the English government, to move warily in the matter. For remote allies to expend their strength in sustaining the sinking elector, while the Protestants nearest him looked upon his struggles with folded arms, seemed superfluous and unreasonable.

"For it is hard," said Walsingham, "for men of judgment to think that he, having no great likelihood of support than yet appeareth he hath, shall be able to prevail against a bishop of Liege, by birth more noble than himself, already possessed of the most part of the bishopric, who will not lack any assistance that the Catholic princes can yield him. As for the supports promised by the kings of Denmark and of Navarre, being in respect of the others but weak and far distant in place, 'tis very doubtful, before the Elector can take any profit thereof, that his cause may miscarry, unless it shall be through God's goodness upholden." (Ibid.)

But, in truth, the Protestant princes of Germany were most lukewarm in the matter, and the complaints of poor Truchsess were founded upon very accurate knowledge as to the sentiments of his compatriots. "By letters received from Germany, as well from Casimir (elector-palatine) as others," continued Walsingham, "I do not find any other forwardness in those that are thought the best affected towards him there, than to *wish well* unto him. But because that help which consists in well-wishing groweth fruitless, unless it be accompanied by effects, which the dulness of the Almaine nature easily yieldeth not until the disease grow desperate, I cannot but advise you, for the Queen's honour, to induce him to make it very probable unto you, that the support now yielded by her Majesty is like to work that effect which he pretendeth." (Ibid.)

Otherwise it was cautiously suggested by the secretary, that the envoy would "do well to forbear to be over-forward in delivering of the money."

of the peace of Passau. The princes had got the Augsburg confession and the abbey-lands into the bargain ; the peasants had got the Augsburg confession without the abbey-lands, and were to believe exactly what their masters believed. This was the German-Lutheran sixteenth-century idea of religious freedom. Neither prince nor peasant stirred in behalf of the struggling Christians in the United Provinces, battling, year after year, knee-deep in blood, amid blazing cities and inundated fields, breast to breast with the yellow-jerkined pikemen of Spain and Italy, with the axe and the faggot and the rack of the Holy Inquisition distinctly visible behind them. Such were the realities which occupied the Netherlands in those days, not watery beams of theological moonshine, fantastical catechism-making, intermingled with scenes of riot and wantonness, which drove old John of Nassau half frantic ; "with banquetting and guzzling, drinking and devouring, with unchristian flaunting and wastefulness of apparel, with extravagant and wanton dancing, and other lewd abominations ;"¹ all which, the firm old reformer prophesied, would lead to the destruction of Germany.

For the mass, slow moving but apparently irresistible, of Spanish and papistical absolutism was gradually closing over Christendom. The Netherlands were the wedge by which alone the solid bulk could be riven asunder. It was the cause of German, of French, of English liberty, for which the Provinces were contending. It was not surprising that they were bitter, getting nothing in their hour of distress from the land of Luther but dogmas and Augsburg catechisms instead of money and gunpowder, and seeing German reiters galloping daily to reinforce the army of Parma in exchange for Spanish ducats.

Brave old La Noue, with the iron arm, noblest of Frenchmen and Huguenots—who had just spent five years in Spanish bondage, writing military discourses in a reeking dungeon, filled with toads and vermin, after fighting the battle of liberty for a life-time, and with his brave son already in the

¹ Groen v. Prinsterer, 'Archives,' &c., i. 227.

Netherlands emulating his father's valour on the same field —denounced at a little later day, the lukewarmness of Protestant Germany with whimsical vehemence:—"I am astounded," he cried, "that these princes are not ashamed of themselves; doing nothing while they see the oppressed cut to pieces at their gates. When will God grant me grace to place me among those who are doing their duty, and afar from those who do nothing, and who ought to know that the cause is a common one. If I am ever caught dancing the German cotillon, or playing the German flute, or eating pike with German sauce, I hope it may be flung in my teeth."¹

The great league of the Pope and Philip was steadily consolidating itself, and there were but gloomy prospects for the counter-league in Germany. There was no hope but in England and France. For the reasons already indicated, the Prince of Orange, taking counsel with the Estates, had resolved to try the French policy once more. The balance of power in Europe, which no man in Christendom so well understood as he, was to be established by maintaining (he thought) the equilibrium between France and Spain. In the antagonism of those two great realms lay the only hope for Dutch or European liberty. Notwithstanding the treason of Anjou, therefore, it had been decided to renew negotiations with that Prince. On the death of the Duke, the envoys of the States were accordingly instructed to make the offer to King Henry III. which had been intended for his brother. That proposition was the sovereignty of all the Netherlands, save Holland and Zeeland, under a constitution maintaining the reformed religion and the ancient laws and privileges of the respective provinces.

But the death of Francis of Anjou had brought about a considerable change in French policy. It was now more sharply defined than ever, a right-angled triangle of almost mathematical precision. The three Henrys and their partizans divided the realm into three hostile camps—threatening each

¹ Gruen v. Prinsterer, 'Archives,' &c., i. 85.

other in simulated peace since the treaty of Fleix (1580), which had put an end to the "lover's war" of the preceding year,—Henry of Valois, Henry of Guise, and Henry of Navarre.

Henry III., last of the Valois line, was now thirty-three years of age. Less than king, less even than man, he was one of those unfortunate personages who seem as if born to make the idea of royalty ridiculous, and to test the capacity of mankind to eat and drink humiliation as if it were wholesome food. It proved how deeply engraved in men's minds of that century was the necessity of kingship, when the hardy Netherlands, who had abjured one tyrant, and had been fighting a generation long rather than return to him, were now willing to accept the sovereignty of a thing like Henry of Valois.

He had not been born without natural gifts, such as Heaven rarely denies to prince or peasant ; but the courage which he once possessed had been exhausted on the field of Moncontour, his manhood had been left behind him at Venice, and such wit as Heaven had endowed him withal was now expended in darting viperous epigrams at court-ladies whom he was only capable of dishonouring by calumny, and whose charms he burned to outrival in the estimation of his minions. For the monarch of France was not unfrequently pleased to attire himself like a woman and a harlot. With silken flounces, jewelled stomacher, and painted face, with pearls of great price adorning his bared neck and breast, and satin-slipped feet, of whose delicate shape and size he was justly vain, it was his delight to pass his days and nights in a ceaseless round of gorgeous festivals, tournaments, processions, masquerades, banquets, and balls, the cost of which glittering frivolities caused the popular burthen and the popular execration to grow, from day to day, more intolerable and more audible. Surrounded by a gang of "minions," the most debauched and the most desperate of France, whose bedizened dresses exhaled perfumes throughout Paris, and whose sanguinary encounters dyed every street in blood, Henry

lived a life of what he called pleasure, careless of what might come after, for he was the last of his race. The fortunes of his minions rose higher and higher, as their crimes rendered them more and more estimable in the eyes of a King who took a woman's pride in the valour of such champions to his weakness, and more odious to a people whose miserable homes were made even more miserable, that the coffers of a few court-favourites might be filled. Now sauntering, full-dressed, in the public promenades, with ghastly little death's heads strung upon his sumptuous garments, and fragments of human bones dangling among his orders of knighthood—playing at cup and ball as he walked, and followed by a few select courtiers who gravely pursued the same exciting occupation—now presiding like a queen of beauty at a tournament to assign the prize of valour, and now, by the advice of his mother, going about the streets in robes of penitence, telling his beads as he went, that the populace might be edified by his piety, and solemnly offering up prayers in the churches that the blessing of an heir might be vouchsafed to him,—Henry of Valois seemed straining every nerve in order to bring himself and his great office into contempt.

As orthodox as he was profligate, he hated the Huguenots, who sought his protection and who could have saved his throne, as cordially as he loved the Jesuits, who passed their lives in secret plottings against his authority and his person, or in fierce denunciations from the Paris pulpits against his manifold crimes. Next to an exquisite and sanguinary fop, he dearly loved a monk. The presence of a friar, he said, exerted as agreeable an effect upon his mind as the most delicate and gentle tickling could produce upon his body ;¹ and he was destined to have a fuller dose of that charming presence than he coveted.

His party—for he was but the nominal chief of a faction, *tanquam unus ex nobis*—was the party in possession—the office-holders' party ; the spoilsmen, whose purpose was to rob

¹ De Thou, x. 667,

the exchequer and to enrich themselves. His minions—for the favourites were called by no other name—were even more hated, because less despised than the King. Attired in cloth of gold—for silk and satin were grown too coarse a material for them—with their little velvet porringer-caps stuck on the sides of their heads, with their long hair stiff with pomatum, and their heads set inside a well-starched ruff a foot wide, “like St. John’s head in a charger,” as a splenetic contemporary observed,¹ with a nimbus of musk and violet-powder enveloping them as they passed before vulgar mortals, these rapacious and insolent courtiers were the impersonation of extortion and oppression to the Parisian populace. They were supposed, not unjustly, to pass their lives in dancing, blasphemy, duelling, dicing, and intrigue, in following the King about like hounds, fawning at his feet, and showing their teeth to all besides ; and for virtues such as these they were rewarded by the highest offices in church, camp, and state, while new taxes and imposts were invented almost daily to feed their avarice and supply their extravagance. France, doomed to feel the beak and talons of these harpies in its entrails, impoverished by a government that robbed her at home while it humiliated her abroad, struggled vainly in its misery, and was now on the verge of another series of internecine combats—civil war seeming the only alternative to a voluptuous and licentious peace.²

“We all stood here at gaze,” wrote ambassador Stafford to Walsingham, “looking for some great matter to come of this sudden journey to Lyons ; but, as far as men can find, *parturiunt montes*, for there hath been nothing but dancing and banquetting from one house to another, bravery in

¹ ‘L’Etoile, *Registre Journal de Henry III.*, ed. Michaud et Poujoulat, p. 72, *seq.*

² “Quant à leur habit il excède
Tout leur bien et tout leur trésor,
Car le mignon qui tout consomme,
Ne se vêt plus en gentilhomme,
Mais comme un prince de drap d’or.
Et pour mieux contenter

Leur jeu, leur pompe, leur bobance,
Et leur trop prodigue dépense,
Il faut tous les jours inventer
Nouveaux impôts, nouvelles tailles,
Qu’il faut du profond des entrailles
Des pauvres sujets arracher,
Qui traînent leurs chetives vies
Sous la griffe de ces harpies,
Qui avalent tout sans macher,” &c.
L’Etoile, ubi sup.

apparel, glittering like the sun.”¹ He mentioned that the Duke of Epernon’s horse, taking fright at a red cloak, had backed over a precipice, breaking his own neck, while his master’s shoulder merely was put out of joint. At the same time the Duke of Joyeuse, coming over Mount Cenis, on his return from Savoy, had broken his wrist. The people, he said, would rather they had both broken their necks “than any other joint, the King having racked the nation for their sakes, as he hath done.”² Stafford expressed much compassion for the French in the plight in which they found themselves. “Unhappy people!” he cried, “to have such a King, who seeketh nothing but to impoverish them to enrich a couple, and who careth not what cometh after his death, so that he may rove on while he liveth, and careth neither for doing his own estate good nor his neighbour’s state harm.” Sir Edward added, however, in a philosophizing vein, worthy of Corporal Nym, that, “seeing we cannot be so happy as to have a King to concur with us to do us any good, yet we are happy to have one that his humour serveth him not to concur with others to do us harm; and ’tis a wisdom for us to follow these humours, that we may keep him still in that humour, and from hearkening to others that may egg him on to worse.”³

It was a dark hour for France, and rarely has a great nation been reduced to a lower level by a feeble and abandoned government than she was at that moment under the distaff of Henry III. Society was corrupted to its core. “There is no more truth, no more justice, no more mercy,” moaned President L’Etoile. “To slander, to lie, to rob, to wench, to steal; all things are permitted save to do right and to speak the truth.” Impiety the most cynical, debauchery the most unveiled, public and unpunished homicides, private murders by what was called magic, by poison, by hired assassins, crimes natural, unnatural, and preternatural, were the common characteristics of the time.⁴ All

¹ Stafford to Walsingham, 24th Aug., 1584, in Murdin, ii. 415-419.

² Ibid.

³ Stafford to Walsingham, *ubi sup.*

⁴ ‘L’Etoile,’ 97, 98; Preface, ‘Histoire du Roi Henri le Grand,’ ed. 1816, p. 29.

posts and charges were venal. Great offices of justice were sold to the highest bidder, and that which was thus purchased by wholesale was retailed in the same fashion. Unhappy the pauper client who dreamed of justice at the hands of law. The great ecclesiastical benefices were equally matter of merchandise, and married men, women, unborn children, enjoyed revenues as dignitaries of the church. Infants came into the world, it was said, like the mitre-fish, stamped with the emblems of place.¹

"'Twas impossible," said L'Etoile, "to find a crab so tortuous and backsliding as the government."²

This was the aspect of the first of the three factions in France. Such was the Henry at its head, the representative of royalty.

Henry with the Scar, Duke of Guise, the well-known chief of the house of Lorraine, was the chief of the extreme papistical party. He was now thirty-four years of age, tall, stately, with a dark, martial face and dangerous eyes, which Antonio Moro loved to paint; a physiognomy made still more expressive by the arquebus-shot which had damaged his left cheek at the fight near Château-Thierry and gained him his name of Balafre. Although one of the most turbulent and restless plotters of that plotting age, he was yet thought more slow and heavy in character than subtle, Teutonic rather than Italian. He was the idol of the Parisian burghers. The grocers, the market-men, the members of the arquebus and crossbow clubs, all doated on him. The fishwomen worshipped him as a god. He was the defender of the good old religion under which Paris and the other cities of France had thriven, the uncompromising opponent of the new-fangled doctrines which western clothiers, and dyers, and tapestry-workers, had adopted, and which the nobles of the mountain-country, the penniless chevaliers of Bearn and Gascony and Guienne, were ceaselessly taking the field and plunging France into misery and bloodshed to support. But for the Balafre and Madam League—as the great Spanish Catholic

¹ Prefixa, 'L'Etoile,' *ubi sup.*

² 'L'Etoile,' *ubi sup.*

conspiracy against the liberties of France, and of England, and of all Europe, was affectionately termed by the Paris populace—honest Catholics would fare no better in France than they did in England, where, as it was well known, they were every day subjected to fearful tortures. The shop-windows were filled with coloured engravings, representing, in exaggerated fashion, the sufferings of the English Catholics under bloody Elizabeth, or Jezebel, as she was called; and as the gaping burghers stopped to ponder over these works of art, there were ever present, as if by accident, some persons of superior information who would condescendingly explain the various pictures, pointing out with a long stick the phenomena most worthy of notice.¹ These caricatures proving highly successful, and being suppressed by order of government, they were repeated upon canvas on a larger scale, in still more conspicuous situations, as if in contempt of the royal authority, which sullied itself by compromise with Calvinism.² The pulpits, meanwhile, thundered denunciations on the one hand against the weak and wicked King, who worshipped idols, and who sacrificed the dearly-earned pittance of his subjects to feed the insolent pomp of his pampered favourites; and on the other, upon the arch-heretic, the arch-apostate, the Bearnese Huguenot, who, after the death of the reigning monarch, would have the effrontery to claim his throne, and to introduce into France the persecutions and the horrors under which unhappy England was already groaning.

The scarce-concealed instigator of these assaults upon the royal and upon the Huguenot faction was, of course, the Duke of Guise,—the man whose most signal achievement had been the Massacre of St. Bartholomew—all the preliminary details of that transaction having been arranged by his skill. So long as Charles IX. was living, the Balafré had created the confusion which was his element, by entertaining and fomenting the perpetual intrigues of Anjou and Alençon against their brother; while the altercations between them and the Queen-

¹ De Thou, ix., 269, 270, *seq.*

² *Ibid.*

Mother and the furious madman who then sat upon the throne, had been the cause of sufficient disorder and calamity for France. On the death of Charles IX. Guise had sought the intimacy of Henry of Navarre, that by his means he might frustrate the hopes of Alençon for the succession. During the early period of the Bearnese's residence at the French court the two had been inseparable, living together, going to the same festivals, tournaments, and masquerades, and even sleeping in the same bed. "My master," was ever Guise's address to Henry; "my gossip," the young King of Navarre's reply. But the crafty Bearnese had made use of the intimacy only to read the secrets of the Balafre's heart; and on Navarre's flight from the court, and his return to Huguenotism, Guise knew that he had been played upon by a subtler spirit than his own. The simulated affection was now changed into undisguised hatred. Moreover, by the death of Alençon, Navarre now stood next the throne, and Guise's plots became still more extensive and more open as his own ambition to usurp the crown on the death of the childless Henry III. became more fervid.¹

Thus, by artfully inflaming the populace of Paris, and—through his organized bands of confederates—that of all the large towns of France, against the Huguenots and their chief, by appeals to the religious sentiment; and at the same time by stimulating the disgust and indignation of the tax-payers everywhere at the imposts and heavy burthens which the boundless extravagance of the court engendered, Guise paved the way for the advancement of the great League which he represented. The other two political divisions were ingeniously represented as mere insolent factions, while his own was the true national and patriotic party, by which alone the ancient religion and the cherished institutions of France could be preserved.²

And the great chief of this national patriotic party was not Henry of Guise, but the industrious old man who sat writing despatches in the depths of the Escorial. Spanish

¹ Perefixe, 28, seq.

² De Thou, Perefixe, *ubi sup.*

counsels, Spanish promises, Spanish ducats—these were the real machinery by which the plots of Guise against the peace of France and of Europe were supported. Madam League was simply Philip II. Nothing was written, officially or unofficially, to the French government by the Spanish court that was not at the same time communicated to “Mucio”—as the Duke of Guise was denominated in the secret correspondence of Philip,—and Mucio was in Philip’s pay, his confidential agent, spy, and confederate, long before the actual existence of the League was generally suspected.

The Queen-Mother, Catharine de’ Medici, played into the Duke’s hands. Throughout the whole period of her widowhood, having been accustomed to govern her sons, she had, in a certain sense, been used to govern the kingdom. By sowing dissensions among her own children, by inflaming party against party, by watching with care the oscillations of France—so that none of the great divisions should obtain preponderance—by alternately caressing and massacring the Huguenots, by cajoling or confronting Philip, by keeping, as she boasted, a spy in every family that possessed the annual income of two thousand livres, by making herself the head of an organized system of harlotry, by which the soldiers and politicians of France were inveigled, their secrets faithfully revealed to her by her well-disciplined maids of honour, by surrounding her unfortunate sons with temptation from earliest youth, and plunging them by cold calculation into deepest debauchery, that their enervated faculties might be ever forced to rely in political affairs on the maternal counsel, and to abandon the administration to the maternal will ; such were the arts by which Catharine had maintained her influence, and a great country been governed for a generation—Machiavellian state-craft blended with the more simple wiles of a procuress.

Now that Alençon was dead, and Henry III. hopeless of issue, it was her determination that the children of her daughter, the Duchess of Lorraine, should succeed to the throne. The matter was discussed as if the throne were already vacant, and Guise and the Queen-Mother, if they

agreed in nothing else, were both cordial in their detestation of Henry of Navarre. The Duke affected to support the schemes in favour of his relatives, the Princes of Lorraine, while he secretly informed the Spanish court that this policy was only a pretence. He was not likely, he said, to advance the interests of the younger branch of a house of which he was himself the chief, nor were their backs equal to the burthen. It was necessary to amuse the old queen, but he was profoundly of opinion that the only sovereign for France, upon the death of Henry, was Philip II. himself. This was the Duke's plan of arriving, by means of Spanish assistance, at the throne of France; and such was Henry le Balafre, chief of the League.¹

And the other Henry, the Huguenot, the Béarnese, Henry of Bourbon, Henry of Navarre, the chieftain of the Gascon chivalry, the king errant, the hope and the darling of the oppressed Protestants in every land—of him it is scarce needful to say a single word. At his very name a figure seems to leap forth from the mist of three centuries, instinct with ruddy vigorous life. Such was the intense vitality of the Béarnese prince, that even now he seems more thoroughly alive and recognizable than half the actual personages who are fretting their hour upon the stage.

We see, at once, a man of moderate stature, light, sinewy, and strong; a face browned with continual exposure; small, mirthful, yet commanding blue eyes, glittering from beneath an arching brow, and prominent cheekbones; a long hawk's nose, almost resting upon a salient chin, a pendent moustache, and a thick, brown, curly beard, prematurely grizzled; we see the mien of frank authority and magnificent good humour, we hear the ready sallies of the shrewd Gascon mother-wit, we feel the electricity which flashes out of him, and sets all hearts around him on fire, when the trumpet sounds to battle. The headlong desperate charge, the snow-white plume waving where the fire is hottest, the large capacity for enjoyment of the man, rioting without affectation in the *certaminis gaudia*,

¹ De Thou, ix. 267.

the insane gallop, after the combat, to lay its trophies at the feet of the Cynthia of the minute, and thus to forfeit its fruits; all are as familiar to us as if the seven distinct wars, the hundred pitched battles, the two hundred sieges, in which the Bearnese was personally present, had been occurrences of our own day.

He at least was both king and man, if the monarch who occupied the throne was neither. He was the man to prove, too, for the instruction of the patient letter-writer of the Escorial, that the crown of France was to be won with foot in stirrup and carbine in hand, rather than to be caught by the weaving and casting of the most intricate nets of diplomatic intrigue, though thoroughly weighted with Mexican gold.

The King of Navarre was now thirty-one years old; for the three Henrys were nearly of the same age. The first indications of his existence had been recognized amid the cannon and trumpets of a camp in Picardy, and his mother had sung a gay Bearnese song as he was coming into the world at Pau. Thus, said his grandfather, Henry of Navarre, thou shalt not bear to us a morose and sulky child. The good king, without a kingdom, taking the child, as soon as born, in the lappel of his dressing-gown, had brushed his infant lips with a clove of garlic, and moistened them with a drop of generous Gascon wine. Thus, said the grandfather again, shall the boy be both merry and bold. There was something mythologically prophetic in the incidents of his birth.

The best part of Navarre had been long since appropriated by Ferdinand of Aragon. In France there reigned a young and warlike sovereign with four healthy boys. But the new-born infant had inherited the lilies of France from St. Louis, and a later ancestor had added to the escutcheon the motto "Espoir." His grandfather believed that the boy was born to revenge upon Spain the wrongs of the House of Albret, and Henry's nature seemed ever pervaded with Robert of Clermont's device.

The same sensible grandfather, having different views on

the subject of education from those manifested by Catharine de' Medici towards her children, had the boy taught to run about bare-headed and bare-footed, like a peasant, among the mountains and rocks of Bearn, till he became as rugged as a young bear, and as nimble as a kid. Black bread, and beef, and garlic, were his simple fare ; and he was taught by his mother and his grandfather to hate lies and liars, and to read the Bible.

When he was fifteen, the third religious war broke out. Both his father and grandfather were dead. His mother, who had openly professed the reformed faith, since the death of her husband, who hated it, brought her boy to the camp at Rochelle, where he was received as the chief of the Huguenots. His culture was not extensive. He had learned to speak the truth, to ride, to shoot, to do with little sleep and less food. He could also construe a little Latin, and had read a few military treatises ; but the mighty hours of an eventful life were now to take him by the hand, and to teach him much good and much evil, as they bore him onward. He now saw military treatises expounded practically by professors, like his uncle Condé, and Admiral Coligny, and Lewis Nassau, in such lecture-rooms as Laudun, and Jarnac, and Montcontour, and never was apter scholar.

The peace of Arnay-le-Duc succeeded, and then the fatal Bartholomew marriage with the Messalina of Valois. The faith taught in the mountains of Bearn was no buckler against the demand of "the mass or death," thundered at his breast by the lunatic Charles, as he pointed to thousands of massacred Huguenots. Henry yielded to such conclusive arguments, and became a Catholic. Four years of court-imprisonment succeeded, and the young King of Navarre, though proof to the artifices of his gossip Guise, was not adamant to the temptations spread for him by Catharine de' Medici. In the harem entertained for him in the Louvre many pitfalls entrapped him ; and he became a stock-performer in the state comedies and tragedies of that plotting age.

A silken web of palace-politics, palace-diplomacy, palace-

revolutions, enveloped him. Schemes and counter-schemes, stratagems and conspiracies, assassinations and poisonings; all the state-machinery which worked so exquisitely in fair ladies' chambers, to spread havoc and desolation over a kingdom, were displayed before his eyes. Now campaigning with one royal brother against Huguenots, now fighting with another on their side, now solicited by the Queen-Mother to attempt the life of her son,¹ now implored by Henry III. to assassinate his brother,² the Bearnese, as fresh antagonisms, affinities, combinations, were developed, detected, neutralized almost daily, became rapidly an adept in Medicean state-chemistry. Charles IX. in his grave, Henry III. on the throne, Alençon in the Huguenot camp—Henry at last made his escape. The brief war and peace of Monsieur succeeded, and the King of Navarre formally abjured the Catholic creed. The parties were now sharply defined. Guise mounted upon the League, Henry astride upon the Reformation, were prepared to do battle to the death. The temporary "war of the amorous" was followed by the peace of Fleix.

Four years of peace again; four fat years of wantonness and riot preceding fourteen hungry famine-stricken years of bloodiest civil war. The voluptuousness and infamy of the Louvre were almost paralleled in vice, if not in splendour, by the miniature court at Pau. Henry's Spartan grandfather would scarce have approved the courses of the youth, whose education he had commenced on so simple a scale. For Margaret of Valois, hating her husband, and living in most undisguised and promiscuous infidelity to him, had profited by her mother's lessons. A seraglio of maids of honour ministered to Henry's pleasures, and were carefully instructed that the peace and war of the kingdom were playthings in their hands. While at Paris royalty was hopelessly sinking; in a poisonous marsh, there was danger that even the hardy nature of the Bearnese would be mortally enervated by the atmosphere in which he lived.³

¹ Preface, 28.

² *Ibid.*, 38, 39.

³ 'Mémoires d'Agrippa d'Aubigné,'
ed. 1854. Appendix, xvii. p. 237.

The unhappy Henry III., baited by the Guises, worried by Alençon and his mother, implored the King of Navarre to return to Paris and the Catholic faith. M. de Ségur, chief of Navarre's council, who had been won over during a visit to the capital, where he had made the discovery that "Henry III. was an angel, and his ministers devils," came back to Pau, urging his master's acceptance of the royal invitation.¹ Henry wavered. Bold D'Aubigné, staunchest of Huguenots, and of his friends, next day privately showed Ségur a palace-window opening on a very steep precipice over the Bayse, and cheerfully assured him that he should be flung from it did he not instantly reverse his proceedings, and give his master different advice. If I am not able to do the deed myself, said D'Aubigné, here are a dozen more to help me. The chief of the council cast a glance behind him, saw a number of grim Puritan soldiers, with their hats plucked down upon their brows, looking very serious; so made his bow, and quite changed his line of conduct.²

At about the same time, Philip II. confidentially offered Henry of Navarre four hundred thousand crowns in hand, and twelve hundred thousand yearly, if he would consent to make war upon Henry III.³ Mucio, or the Duke of Guise, being still in Philip's pay, the combination of Leaguers and Huguenots against the unfortunate Valois would, it was thought, be a good triangular contest.

But Henry—no longer the unsophisticated youth who had been used to run barefoot among the cliffs of Coarasse—was grown too crafty a politician to be entangled by Spanish or Medicean wiles. The Duke of Anjou was now dead. Of all the princes who had stood between him and the throne, there

¹ D'Aubigné, 'Memoires,' p. 67, 68.

² Ibid.

³ "The Abp. of Colein told me that the Prince of Orange had acquainted him with a practice of the King of Spain's, which was an offer made to the King of Navarre of 400,000 Δ* in ready money, and a 100,000 Δ* monthly, if he would make wars with the French king—where-

unto I answered, that I thought it done with a Spanish mind and cunning to draw the King of Navarre, as Sebastian of Portugal was, to his ruin and loss of life and kingdom, and by this means to destroy also the religion and churches in France," &c. (Herle to Queen Elizabeth, 22d July, 1584. S. P. Office MS.)

was none remaining save the helpless, childless, superannuated youth, who was its present occupant. The King of Navarre was legitimate heir to the crown of France. "Espoir" was now in letters of light upon his shield, but he knew that his path to greatness led through manifold dangers, and that it was only at the head of his Huguenot chivalry that he could cut his way. He was the leader of the nobles of Gascony, and Dauphiny, and Guienne, in their mountain fastnesses, of the weavers, cutlers, and artizans, in their thriving manufacturing and trading towns. It was not Spanish gold, but carbines and cutlasses, bows and bills, which could bring him to the throne of his ancestors.

And thus he stood the chieftain of that great austere party of Huguenots, the men who went on their knees before the battle, beating their breasts with their iron gauntlets, and singing in full chorus a psalm of David, before smiting the Philistines hip and thigh.

Their chieftain, scarcely their representative—fit to lead his Puritans on the battle-field, was hardly a model for them elsewhere. Yet, though profligate in one respect, he was temperate in every other. In food, wine, and sleep, he was always moderate. Subtle and crafty in self-defence, he retained something of his old love of truth, of his hatred for liars. Hardly generous perhaps, he was a friend of justice, while economy in a wandering King, like himself, was a necessary virtue, of which France one day was to feel the beneficent action. Reckless and headlong in appearance, he was in truth the most careful of men. On the religious question, most cautious of all, he always left the door open behind him, disclaimed all bigotry of opinion, and earnestly implored the Papists to seek, not his destruction, but his instruction. Yet prudent as he was by nature in every other regard, he was all his life the slave of one woman or another, and it was by good luck rather than by sagacity that he did not repeatedly forfeit the fruits of his courage and conduct, in obedience to his master-passion.

Always open to conviction on the subject of his faith, he

repudiated the appellation of heretic. A creed, he said, was not to be changed like a shirt, but only on due deliberation, and under special advice. In his secret heart he probably regarded the two religions as his chargers, and was ready to mount alternately the one or the other, as each seemed the more likely to bear him safely in the battle. The Bearnese was no Puritan, but he was most true to himself and to his own advancement. His highest principle of action was to reach his goal, and to that principle he was ever loyal. Feeling, too, that it was the interest of France that he should succeed, he was even inspired—compared with others on the stage—by an almost lofty patriotism.

Amiable by nature and by habit, he had preserved the most unimpaired good-humour throughout the horrible years which succeeded St. Bartholomew, during which he carried his life in his hand, and learned not to wear his heart upon his sleeve. Without gratitude, without resentment, without fear, without remorse, entirely arbitrary, yet with the capacity to use all men's judgments; without convictions, save in regard to his dynastic interests, he possessed all the qualities necessary to success. He knew how to use his enemies. He knew how to use his friends, to abuse them, and to throw them away. He refused to assassinate Francis Alençon at the bidding of Henry III., but he attempted to procure the murder of the truest of his own friends, one of the noblest characters of the age—whose breast showed twelve scars received in his service—Agrippa D'Aubigné, because the honest soldier had refused to become his pimp—a service the King had implored upon his knees.¹

Beneath the mask of perpetual careless good-humour, lurked the keenest eye, a subtle, restless, widely combining brain, and an iron will. Native sagacity had been tempered into consummate elasticity by the fiery atmosphere in which feebler natures had been dissolved. His wit was as flashing and as quickly unsheathed as his sword. Desperate, apparently reckless temerity on the battle-field was deliberately indulged

¹ D'Aubigné, 'Memoires,' pp. 38-44.

in, that the world might be brought to recognise a hero and chieftain in a King. The do-nothings of the Merovingian line had been succeeded by the Pepins ; to the effete Carolingians had come a Capet ; to the impotent Valois should come a worthier descendant of St. Louis. This was shrewd Gascon calculation, aided by constitutional fearlessness. When despatch-writing, invisible Philips, star-gazing Rudolphs, and petticoated Henrys, sat upon the thrones of Europe, it was wholesome to show the world that there was a King left who could move about in the bustle and business of the age, and could charge as well as most soldiers at the head of his cavalry ; that there was one more sovereign fit to reign over men, besides the glorious Virgin who governed England.

Thus courageous, crafty, far-seeing, consistent, untiring, imperturbable, he was born to command, and had a right to reign. He had need of the throne, and the throne had still more need of him.

This then was the third Henry, representative of the third side of the triangle, the reformers of the kingdom.

And before this bubbling cauldron of France, where intrigues, foreign and domestic, conflicting ambitions, stratagems, and hopes, were whirling in never-ceasing tumult, was it strange if the plain Netherland envoys should stand somewhat aghast ?

Yet it was necessary that they should ponder well the aspect of affairs ; for all their hopes, the very existence of themselves and of their religion, depended upon the organization which should come of this chaos.

It must be remembered, however, that those statesmen—even the wisest or the best-informed of them—could not take so correct a view of France and its politics as it is possible for us, after the lapse of three centuries, to do. The interior leagues, subterranean schemes, conflicting factions, could only be guessed at ; nor could the immediate future be predicted, even by such far-seeing politicians as William of Orange, at a distance, or Henry of Navarre, upon the spot.

It was obvious to the Netherlanders that France, although

torn by faction, was a great and powerful realm. There had now been, with the brief exception of the lovers' war in 1580, a religious peace of eight years' duration. The Huguenots had enjoyed tranquil exercise of their worship during that period, and they expressed perfect confidence in the good faith of the King. That the cities were inordinately taxed to supply the luxury of the court could hardly be unknown to the Netherlanders. Nevertheless they knew that the kingdom was the richest and most populous of Christendom, after that of Spain. Its capital, already called by contemporaries the "compendium of the world," was described by travellers as "stupendous in extent and miraculous for its numbers." It was even said to contain eight hundred thousand souls, and although its actual population did not probably exceed three hundred and twenty thousand, yet this was more than double the number of London's inhabitants, and thrice as many as Antwerp could then boast, now that a great proportion of its foreign denizens had been scared away. Paris was at least by one hundred thousand more populous than any city of Europe, except perhaps the remote and barbarous Moscow, while the secondary cities of France, Rouen in the north, Lyons in the centre, and Marseilles in the south, almost equalled in size, business, wealth, and numbers, the capitals of other countries. In the whole kingdom were probably ten or twelve millions of inhabitants, nearly as many as in Spain, without her colonies, and perhaps three times the number that dwelt in England.

In a military point of view, too, the alliance of France was most valuable to the contiguous Netherlands. A few regiments of French troops, under the command of one of their experienced Marshals, could block up the Spaniards in the Walloon Provinces, effectually stop their operations against Ghent, Antwerp, and the other great cities of Flanders and Brabant, and, with the combined action of the United Provinces on the north, so surround and cripple the forces of Parma, as to reduce the power of Philip, after a few vigorous and well-concerted blows, to an absolute nullity in the Low

Countries. As this result was of as vital importance to the real interests of France and of Europe, whether Protestant or Catholic, as it was to the Provinces, and as the French government had privately manifested a strong desire to oppose the progress of Spain towards universal empire, it was not surprising that the States General, not feeling capable of standing alone, should make their application to France. This they had done with the knowledge and concurrence of the English government. What lay upon the surface the Netherland statesmen saw and pondered well. What lurked beneath, they surmised as shrewdly as they could, but it was impossible, with plummet and fathom-line ever in hand, to sound the way with perfect accuracy, where the quicksands were ever shifting, and the depth or shallowness of the course perpetually varying. It was not easy to discover the intentions of a government which did not know its own intentions, and whose changing policy was controlled by so many hidden currents.

Moreover, as already indicated, the envoys and those whom they represented had not the same means of arriving at a result as are granted to us. Thanks to the liberality of many modern governments of Europe, the archives where the state-secrets of the buried centuries have so long mouldered, are now open to the student of history. To him who has patience and industry many mysteries are thus revealed, which no political sagacity or critical acumen could have divined. He leans over the shoulder of Philip the Second at his writing-table, as the King spells patiently out, with cipher-key in hand, the most concealed hieroglyphics of Parma or Guise or Mendoza. He reads the secret thoughts of "Fabius,"¹ as that cunctative Roman scrawls his marginal apostilles on each despatch; he pries into all the stratagems of Camillus, Hortensius, Mucius, Julius, Tullius, and the rest of those ancient heroes who lent their names to the diplomatic masqueraders of the 16th century; he enters the cabinet of the

¹ The name usually assigned to Philip himself in the Paris-Simancas Correspondence.

deeply-pondering Burghley, and takes from the most private drawer the memoranda which record that minister's unutterable doubtings ; he pulls from the dressing-gown folds of the stealthy, softly-gliding Walsingham the last secret which he has picked from the Emperor's pigeon-holes, or the Pope's pocket, and which, not Hatton, nor Buckhurst, nor Leicester, nor the Lord Treasurer, is to see ; nobody but Elizabeth herself ; he sits invisible at the most secret councils of the Nassaus and Barneveldt and Buys, or pores with Farnese over coming victories, and vast schemes of universal conquest ; he reads the latest bit of scandal, the minutest characteristic of king or minister, chronicled by the gossiping Venetians for the edification of the Forty ; and, after all this prying and eavesdropping, having seen the cross-purposes, the bribings, the windings, the fencings in the dark, he is not surprised, if those who were systematically deceived did not always arrive at correct conclusions.

Noel de Caron, Seigneur de Schoneval, had been agent of the States at the French court at the time of the death of the Duke of Anjou. Upon the occurrence of that event, La Mouillerie and Asseliers were deputed by the Provinces to King Henry III., in order to offer him the sovereignty, which they had intended to confer upon his brother.¹ Meantime that brother, just before his death, and with the privity of Henry, had been negotiating for a marriage with the younger daughter of Philip II.—an arrangement somewhat incompatible with his contemporaneous scheme to assume the sovereignty of Philip's revolted Provinces. An attempt had been made at the same time to conciliate the Duke of Savoy, and invite him to the French court ; but the Duc de Joyeuse, then on his return from Turin, was bringing the news, not only that the match with Anjou was not favored—which, as Anjou was dead, was of no great consequence—but that the Duke of Savoy was himself to espouse the Infanta, and was therefore

¹ 'Verhael van 't gene de heeren de la Mouillerie ende van Asseliers hebben gedaan ende gebesoigneert, midsgaders verstaen in henluyden reise

naer Vrankryck aen den Coninck racckende den last hen gegeven op mijne heeren de Generale Staten.' (Royal Archives at the Hague, MS.)

compelled to decline the invitation to Paris, for fear of offending his father-in-law.¹ Other matters were in progress, to be afterwards indicated, very much interfering with the negotiations of the Netherland envoys.

When La Mouillerie and Asseliers arrived at Rouen, on their road from Dieppe to Paris, they received a peremptory order from the Queen-Mother to proceed no farther. This prohibition was brought by an unofficial personage, and was delivered, not to them, but to Des Pruneaux, French envoy to the States General, who had accompanied the envoys to France.²

After three weeks' time, during which they "kept themselves continually concealed in Rouen," there arrived in that city a young nephew of Secretary Brulart, who brought letters empowering him to hear what they had in charge for the King. The envoys, not much flattered by such cavalier treatment on the part of him to whom they were offering a crown, determined to digest the affront as they best might, and, to save time, opened the whole business to this subordinate stripling. He received from them accordingly an ample memoir to be laid before his Majesty, and departed by the post the same night. Then they waited ten days longer, concealed as if they had been thieves or spies, rather than the representatives of a friendly power, on a more than friendly errand.

At last, on the 24th July, after the deputies had been thus 24th July, shut up a whole month, Secretary Brulart himself
1584. arrived from Fontainebleau.⁴

He stated that the King sent his royal thanks to the States for the offer which they had made him, and to the deputies in particular for taking the trouble of so long a journey; but

¹ Stafford to Walsingham, 29th Aug., 1584, in Murdin, ii. 419, 420.

² 'Lettre des Deputés en France au Prince d'Oranges du 16 Juillet, 1584,' (Hague Archives MS.) This letter to William the Silent was written six days after his death.

³ MS. Letter in Hague Archives, before cited.

⁴ 'Rapport fait par Noel de Caron, aiant esté député de la part de Mes-seigneurs les Etats generaux vers la Majesté du Roy de France, en l'assemblée des dicts Estats à Delft, le 5 Août, 1584.' (Hague Archives MS.)

that he did not find his realm in condition to undertake a foreign war so inopportune. In every other regard, his Majesty offered the States "all possible favours and pleasures."¹

Certainly, after having been thus kept in prison for a month, the ambassadors had small cause to be contented with this very cold communication. To be forbidden the royal presence, and to be turned out of the country without even an official and accredited answer to a communication in which they had offered the sovereignty of their fatherland, was not flattering to their dignity. "We little thought," said they to Brulart, after a brief consultation among themselves, "to receive such a reply as this. It displeases us infinitely that his Majesty will not do us the honour to grant us an audience. We must take the liberty of saying, that 'tis treating the States, our masters, with too much contempt. Who ever heard before of refusing audience to public personages? Kings often grant audience to mere letter-carriers. Even the King of Spain never refused a hearing to the deputies from the Netherlands when they came to Spain to complain of his own government. The States General have sent envoys to many other kings and princes, and they have instantly granted audience in every case. His Majesty, too, has been very ill-informed of the contracts which we formerly made with the Duke of Anjou, and therefore a personal interview is the more necessary." As the envoys were obstinate on the point of Paris, Brulart said "that the King, although he should himself be at Lyons, would not prevent any one from going to the capital on his own private affairs; but would unquestionably take it very ill if they should visit that city in a public manner, and as deputies."²

Des Pruneaux professed himself "very grievous at this result, and desirous of a hundred deaths in consequence."

They stated that they should be ready within a month to

¹ Report of Noel de Caron, MS. before cited.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ "Dont le diet Sr. des Epruneaux estoit en son particulier fort dolent, et se soubhaita cent fois estre mort," &c. (MS. Report before cited.)

bring an army of 3,000 horse and 13,000 foot into the field for the relief of Ghent, besides their military operations against Zutphen; and that the enemy had recently been ignominiously defeated in his attack upon Fort Lillo, and had lost 2,000 of his best soldiers.¹

Here were encouraging facts; and it certainly was worth the while of the French sovereign to pause a moment before rejecting without a hearing, the offer of such powerful and conveniently-situated provinces.

Des Pruneaux, a man of probity and earnestness, but perhaps of insufficient ability to deal with such grave matters as now fell almost entirely upon his shoulders,² soon afterwards obtained audience of the King. Being most sincerely in favour of the annexation of the Netherlands to France, and feeling that now or never was the opportunity of bringing it about, he persuaded the King to send him back to the Provinces, in order to continue the negotiation directly with the States General. The timidity and procrastination of the court could be overcome no further.

The two Dutch envoys, who had stolen secretly to Paris, were indulged in a most barren and unmeaning interview with the Queen-Mother. Before their departure from France, however, they had the advantage of much conversation with leading members of the royal council, of the parliaments of Paris and Rouen, and also with various persons professing the reformed religion. They endeavoured thus to inform themselves, as well as they could, why the King made so much difficulty in accepting their propositions, and whether, and by what means, his Majesty could be induced to make war in their behalf upon the King of Spain.³

They were informed that, *should Holland and Zeeland unite with the rest of the Netherlands*, the King "without any doubt would undertake the cause most earnestly." His councillors, also—even those who had been most active in dissuading his Majesty from such a policy—would then be

¹ MS. Letter to the States-General before cited.

² De Thou, ix. 251.

³ MS. Verhael before cited.

unanimous in supporting the annexation of the Provinces and the war with Spain. In such a contingency, with the potent assistance of Holland and Zeeland, the King would have little difficulty, within a very short time, in chasing every single Spaniard out of the Netherlands. To further this end, many leading personages in France avowed to the envoys their determination "to venture their lives and their fortunes, and to use all the influence which they possessed at court."

The same persons expressed their conviction that the King, once satisfied by the Provinces as to conditions and reasons, would cheerfully go into the war, without being deterred by any apprehension as to the power of Spain. It was, however, fitting that each Province should chaffer as little as possible about details, but should give his Majesty every reasonable advantage. They should remember that they were dealing with "a great, powerful monarch, who was putting his realm in jeopardy, and not with a Duke of Anjou, who had every thing to gain and nothing to lose."¹

All the Huguenots, with whom the envoys conversed, were excessively sanguine. Could the King be once brought they said, to promise the Netherlands his protection, there was not the least fear but that he would keep his word. He would use all the means within his power; "yea, he would take the crown from his head," rather than turn back. Although reluctant to commence a war with so powerful a sovereign, having once promised his help, he would keep his pledge to the utmost, "*for he was a King of his word,*" and had never broken and would never break his faith with those of the reformed religion.²

¹ Moullerie and Asseliers, MS. before cited.

² "Dus Verclarende oick bezunder die van de Religie, die wy gesproken hebben, dat zoo verre wy consten den Coninck zoo verre bringen dat hy ons beloofde te beschermen, wy niet en dorfden vreessen oft hy en zoudt ons houden ende zoude gebruycken alle zyne middelen, jae die crone van zynen hoofde, seggende dat hoe wel hy zeer

qualycken es, om totter oirlooge te brengen-niet zonder oirzaecke, mids het es tegen eenen alzulcken machtigen Prince, dat hebbende beloofd ons te helpen, dat hy nyet laten en zoude tzelfie int neerste te houden, want hy es (zoo zy ons verclaerden) eenen Coninck van zynen woorde zyn beloofte houdende, ende zelve die van der religie seyden ons, dat hy hen nemmermeer en hadde gefailleert van

Thus spoke the leading Huguenots of France, in confidential communication with the Netherland envoys, not many months before the famous edict of extermination, published at Nemours.

At that moment the reformers were full of confidence ; not foreseeing the long procession of battles and sieges which was soon to sweep through the land. Notwithstanding the urgency of the Papists for their extirpation, they extolled loudly the liberty of religious worship which Calvinists, as well as Catholics, were enjoying in France, and pointed to the fact that the adherents of both religions were well received at court, and that they shared equally in offices of trust and dignity throughout the kingdom.¹

The Netherland envoys themselves bore testimony to the undisturbed tranquillity and harmony in which the professors of both religions were living and worshipping side by side "without reproach or quarrel" in all the great cities which they had visited. They expressed the conviction that the same toleration would be extended to all the Provinces when under French dominion ; and, so far as their ancient constitutions and privileges were concerned, they were assured that the King of France would respect and maintain them with as much fidelity as the States could possibly desire.²

Des Pruneaux, accompanied by the two States' envoys, departed forthwith for the Netherlands. On the 24th August, 1584, he delivered a discourse before the States General, in which he disclosed, in very general terms, the expectations of Henry III., and intimated very clearly that the different Provinces were to lose no time in making an unconditional offer to that monarch. With regard to Holland and Zeeland he observed that he was provided with a special commission to those Estates.³

It was not long before one Province after the other came

tgene hy hen beloof hadde." (Mouillierie and Asseliers, Verhael, &c. MS. before cited.)

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ Wagenaar, viii. 31. seq.

to the conclusion to offer the sovereignty to the King without written conditions, but with a general understanding that their religious freedom and their ancient constitutions were to be sacredly respected. Meantime, Des Pruneaux made his appearance in Holland and Zeeland, and declared the King's intentions of espousing the cause of the States, and of accepting the sovereignty of all the Provinces. He distinctly observed, however, that it was as sovereign, not as protector, that his Majesty must be recognised in Holland and Zeeland as well as in the rest of the country.

Upon this grave question there was much debate and much difference of opinion. Holland and Zeeland had never contemplated the possibility of accepting any foreign sovereignty, and the opponents of the present scheme were loud and angry, but very reasonable in their remarks.¹

The French, they said, were no respecters of privileges nor of persons. The Duke of Anjou had deceived William of Orange and betrayed the Provinces. Could they hope to see farther than that wisest and most experienced prince? Had not the stout hearts of the Antwerp burghers proved a stronger defence to Brabant liberties than the "joyous entry" on the dread day of the "French fury," it would have fared ill then and for ever with the cause of freedom and religion in the Netherlands. The King of France was a Papist, a Jesuit. He was incapable of keeping his pledges. Should they make the arrangement now proposed and confer the sovereignty upon him, he would forthwith make peace with Spain, and transfer the Provinces back to that crown in exchange for the duchy of Milan, which France had ever coveted. The Netherlands, after a quarter of a century of fighting in defence of their hearths and altars, would find themselves handed over again, bound and fettered, to the tender mercies of the Spanish Inquisition.²

The Kings of France and of Spain always acted in concert, for religion was the most potent of bonds. Witness the

¹ Wagenaar, *Bor*, xix. 462.

² 'Vertoog van Gouda tegen den | handel met Frankryk' apud *Bor*, II. 489
seq.; Wagenaar, viii. 41, seq.

sacrifice of thousands of French soldiers to Alva by their own sovereign at Mons, witness the fate of Genlis, witness the bloody night of St. Bartholomew, witness the Antwerp fury. Men cited and relied upon the advice of William of Orange as to this negociation with France. But Orange never dreamed of going so far as now proposed. He was ever careful to keep the Provinces of Holland and Zeeland safe from every foreign master. That spot was to be holy ground. Not out of personal ambition. God forbid that they should accuse his memory of any such impurity, but because he wished one safe refuge for the spirit of freedom.

Many years long they had held out by land and sea against the Spaniards, and should they now, because this Des Pruneaux shrugged his shoulders, be so alarmed as to open the door to the same Spaniard wearing the disguise of a Frenchman ?¹

Prince Maurice also made a brief representation to the States' Assembly of Holland, in which, without distinctly opposing the negociation with France, he warned them not to proceed too hastily with so grave a matter. He reminded them how far they had gone in the presentation of the sovereignty to his late father, and requested them, in their dealings with France, not to forget his interests and those of his family. He reminded them of the position of that family, overladen with debt contracted in their service alone. He concluded by offering most affectionately his service in any way in which he, young and inexperienced as he knew himself to be, might be thought useful ; as he was long since resolved to devote his life to the welfare of his country.²

These passionate appeals were answered with equal vehemence by those who had made up their minds to try the chances of the French sovereignty. Des Pruneaux, meanwhile, was travelling from province to province, and from city to city, using the arguments which have already been sufficiently

¹ "En zou ons nu 't gerugt van zyne aankomst, en dat Pruneaux de schouders optrok, dermaate verbaazen, dat wy hem zelv' als een Franschman

vermond, gingen inhaalen?" (Ibid.)

² Bor, II. (xix.) 488, *seq.*; Wage- naar, viii. 39, 40.

indicated, and urging a speedy compliance with the French King's propositions. At the same time, in accordance with his instructions, he was very cautious to confine himself to generalities, and to avoid hampering his royal master with the restrictions which had proved so irksome to the Duke of Anjou.

"The States General demanded a copy of my speech," he wrote the day after that harangue had been delivered, "but I only gave them a brief outline; extending myself 25th Aug., as little as I possibly could, according to the 1584 intention and command of your Majesty. When I got here, I found them without hope of our assistance, and terribly agitated by the partizans of Spain. There was some danger of their going over in a panic to the enemy. They are now much changed again, and the Spanish partizans are beginning to lose their tongues. I invite them, if they intend to address your Majesty, to proceed as they ought towards a veritably grand monarch, without hunting up any of their old quibbles, or reservations of provinces, or any thing else which could inspire suspicion. I have sent into Gelderland and Friesland, for I find I must stay here in Holland and Zeeland myself. These two provinces are the gates and ramparts through which we must enter. 'Tis, in my opinion, what could be called superb, to command all the sea, thus subject to the crown of France. And France, too, with assistance of this country, will command the land as well. They are much astonished here, however, that I communicate nothing of the intention of your Majesty. They say that if your Majesty does not accept this offer of their country, your Majesty puts the rope around their necks."¹

The French envoy was more and more struck with the brilliancy of the prize offered to his master. "If the King gets these Provinces," said he to Catharine, "'t will be the most splendid inheritance which Prince has ever conquered."²

In a very few weeks the assiduity of the envoy and of the

¹ Groen v. Prinsterer, 'Archives,' 1. 1-3. ² Groen v. Prinsterer, 'Archives,' 1. 4.

French party was successful. All the other provinces had very soon repeated the offer which they had previously made through Asseliers and La Mouillerie. By the beginning of October the opposition of Holland was vanquished. The estates of that Province—three cities excepted, however—determined “to request England and France to assume a joint protectorate over the Netherlands. In case the King of France should refuse this proposition, they were then ready to receive him as prince and master, with knowledge and consent of the Queen of England, and on such conditions as the United States should approve.”¹

Immediately afterwards, the General Assembly of all the States determined to offer the sovereignty to King Henry *on conditions to be afterwards settled.*²

Des Pruneaux, thus triumphant, received a gold chain of the value of two thousand florins, and departed before the end of October for France.³

The departure of the solemn embassy to that country, for the purpose of offering the sovereignty to the King, was delayed till the beginning of January. Meantime it is necessary to cast a glance at the position of England in relation to these important transactions.

¹ Wagenaar, viii. 49.

² Ibid.; Bor, II. 495, Hoofd, xxi. 945.

³ Wagenaar, viii. 51; ‘Resol. Holl.’

24th Oct., 1584, bl. 651.

CHAPTER III.

Policy of England—Schemes of the Pretender of Portugal—Hesitation of the French Court—Secret Wishes of France—Contradictory Views as to the Opinions of Netherlanders—Their Love for England and Elizabeth—Prominent Statesmen of the Provinces—Roger Williams the Welshman—Views of Walsingham, Burghley, and the Queen—An Embassy to Holland decided upon—Davison at the Hague—Cautious and Secret Measures of Burghley—Consequent Dissatisfaction of Walsingham—English and Dutch Suspicion of France—Increasing Affection of Holland for England.

THE policy of England towards the Provinces had been somewhat hesitating, but it had not been disloyal. It was almost inevitable that there should be timidity in the councils of Elizabeth, when so grave a question as that of confronting the vast power of Spain was forcing itself day by day more distinctly upon the consideration of herself and her statesmen. It was very clear, now that Orange was dead, that some new and decided step would be taken. Elizabeth was in favour of combined action by the French and English governments, in behalf of the Netherlands—a joint protectorate of the Provinces, until such time as adequate concessions on the religious question could be obtained from Spain. She was unwilling to plunge into the peril and expense of a war with the strongest power in the world. She disliked the necessity under which she should be placed of making repeated applications to her parliament, and of thus fostering the political importance of the Commons; she was reluctant to encourage rebellious subjects in another land, however just the cause of their revolt. She felt herself vulnerable in Ireland and on the Scottish border. Nevertheless, the Spanish power was becoming so preponderant, that if the Netherlands were conquered, she could never feel a moment's security within her own territory. If the Provinces were annexed to France, on

the other hand, she could not contemplate with complacency the increased power thus placed in the hands of the treacherous and jesuitical house of Valois.

The path of the Queen was thickly strewn with peril: her advisers were shrewd, far-seeing, patriotic, but some of them were perhaps over cautious. The time had, however, arrived when the danger was to be faced, if the whole balance of power in Europe were not to come to an end, and weak states, like England and the Netherlands, to submit to the tyranny of an overwhelming absolutism. The instinct of the English sovereign, of English statesmen, of the English nation, taught them that the cause of the Netherlands was their own. Nevertheless, they were inclined to look on yet a little longer, although the part of spectator had become an impossible one. The policy of the English government was not treacherous, although it was timid. That of the French court was both the one and the other, and it would have been better both for England and the Provinces, had they more justly appreciated the character of Catharine de' Medici and her son.

The first covert negotiations between Henry and the States had caused much anxiety among the foreign envoys in France. Don Bernardino de Mendoza, who had recently returned from Spain after his compulsory retreat from his post of English ambassador, was now established in Paris, as representative of Philip. He succeeded Tassis—a Netherlander by birth, and one of the ablest diplomatists in the Spanish service—and his house soon became the focus of intrigue against the government to which he was accredited—the very head-quarters of the League. His salary was large, his way of living magnificent, his insolence intolerable.

"Tassis is gone to the Netherlands," wrote envoy Busbecq to the Emperor, "and thence is to proceed to Spain. Don Bernardino has arrived in his place. If it be the duty of a good ambassador to expend largely, it would be difficult to find a better one than he; for they say 'tis his intention to spend sixteen thousand dollars yearly in his embassy. I

would that all things were in correspondence, and that he were not in other respects so inferior to Tassis."¹

It is, however, very certain that Mendoza was not only a brave soldier, but a man of very considerable capacity in civil affairs, although his inordinate arrogance interfered most seriously with his skill as a negotiator. He was, of course, watching with much fierceness the progress of these underhand proceedings between the French court and the rebellious subjects of his master, and using threats and expostulations in great profusion. "Mucio," too, the great stipendiary of Philip, was becoming daily more dangerous, and the adherents of the League were multiplying with great celerity.

The pretender of Portugal, Don Antonio, prior of Crato, was also in Paris; and it was the policy of both the French and the English governments to protect his person, and to make use of him as a rod over the head of Philip. Having escaped, after the most severe sufferings, in the mountains of Spain, where he had been tracked like a wild beast, with a price of thirty thousand crowns placed upon his head, he was now most anxious to stir the governments of Europe into espousing his cause, and into attacking Spain through the recently acquired kingdom of Portugal. Meantime, he was very desirous of some active employment, to keep himself from starving, and conceived the notion, that it would be an excellent thing for the Netherlands and himself, were he to make good to them the loss of William the Silent.

"Don Antonio," wrote Stafford, "made a motion to me yesterday, to move her Majesty, that now upon the Prince of Orange's death, as it is a necessary thing for them to have a governor and head, and him to be at her Majesty's devotion, if her Majesty would be at the means to work it for him, she should be assured nobody should be more faithfully tied in devotion to her than he. Truly you would pity the poor man's case, who is almost next door to starving in effect."²

¹ Busbecqui. 'Epist. ad Rud.' ii. p. 132.

² Stafford to Walsingham, Murdin ii. 412-415.

A starving condition being, however, not the only requisite in a governor and head to replace the Prince of Orange, nothing came of this motion. Don Antonio remained in Paris, in a pitiable plight, and very much environed by dangers; for the Duke of Guise and his brother had undertaken to deliver him into the hands of Philip the Second, or those of his ministers, before the feast of St. John of the coming year. Fifty thousand dollars were to be the reward of this piece of work, combined with other services; "and the sooner they set about it the better," said Philip, writing a few months later, "for the longer they delay it, the less easy will they find it."¹

The money was never earned, however, and meantime Don Antonio made himself as useful as he could, in picking up information for Sir Edward Stafford and the other opponents of Spanish policy in Paris.

The English envoy was much embarrassed by the position of affairs. He felt sure that the French monarch would never dare to enter the lists against the king of Spain, yet he was accurately informed of the secret negotiations with the Netherlands, while in the dark as to the ultimate intentions of his own government.

"I was never set to school so much," he wrote to Walsingham (27th July, 1584), "as I have been to decipher the cause of the deputies of the Low Countries coming hither, the offers that they made the King here, and the King's manner of dealing with them."²

He expressed great jealousy at the mystery which enveloped the whole transaction; and much annoyance with Noel de Caron, who "kept very secret, and was angry at the motion," when he endeavoured to discover the business in which they were engaged. Yet he had the magnanimity to request Walsingham not to mention the fact to the Queen, lest she should be thereby prejudiced against the States.

"For my part," said he, "I would be glad in any thing to

¹ Philip II. to J. B. Tassia, 15 and 28 March, 1585. (Archivo general de Simancas. Negociado de Estado Flandes. MS.) ² Murdin *ubi supra*.

further them, rather than to hinder them—though they do not deserve it—yet for the good the helping them at this time may bring ourselves.”¹

Meantime, the deputies went away from France, and the King went to Lyons, where he had hoped to meet both the Duke of Savoy and the King of Navarre. But Joyeuse, who had been received at Chambery with “great triumphs and tourneys,” brought back only a broken wrist, without bringing the Duke of Savoy; that potentate sending word that the “King of Spain had done him the honour to give him his daughter, and that it was not fit for him to do any thing that might bring jealousy.”²

Henry of Navarre also, as we have seen, declined the invitation sent him, M. de Ségur not feeling disposed for the sudden flight out of window suggested by Agrippa D’Aubigné; so that, on the whole, the King and his mother, with all the court, returned from Lyons in marvellous ill humour.

“The King storms greatly,” said Stafford, “and is in a great dump.”³ It was less practicable than ever to discover the intentions of the government; for although it was now very certain that active exertions were making by Des Pruniaux in the Provinces, it was not believed by the most sagacious that a serious resolution against Spain had been taken in France. There was even a talk of a double matrimonial alliance, at that very moment, between the two courts.

“It is for certain here said,” wrote Stafford, “that the King of Spain doth presently marry the dowager of France, and ’tis thought that if the King of Spain marry, he will not live a year. Whensoever the marriage be,” added the envoy, “I would to God the effect were true, for if it be not by some such handy work of God, I am afraid things will not go so well as I could wish.”⁴

There was a lull on the surface of affairs, and it was not easy to sound the depths of unseen combinations and intrigues.

¹ Murdin, *ubi supra*.

² Murdin, ii. 419, 420.

³ *Ibid*.

⁴ *Ibid*

There was also considerable delay in the appointment and the arrival of the new deputies from the Netherlands ; and Stafford was as doubtful as ever as to the intentions of his own government.

"They look daily here for the States," he wrote to Walsingham (29th Dec. 1584), "and I pray that I may hear from you as soon as you may, what course I shall take when they be here, either hot or cold or lukewarm in the matter, and in what sort I shall behave myself. Some badly affected have gone about to put into the King's head, that they never meant to offer the sovereignty, which, though the King be not thoroughly persuaded of, yet so much is won by this means that the King *hearkeneth* to see the end, and then to believe as he seeth cause, and in the meantime to speak no more of any such matter than if it had never been moved."¹

While his Majesty was thus hearkening in order to see more, according to Sir Edward's somewhat Hibernian mode of expressing himself, and keeping silent that he might see the better, it was more difficult than ever for the envoy to know what course to pursue. Some persons went so far as to suggest that the whole negotiation was a mere phantasmagoria devised by Queen Elizabeth—her purpose being to breed a quarrel between Henry and Philip for her own benefit ; and "then, seeing them together by the ears, as her accustomed manner was, to let them go alone, and sit still to look on."²

The King did not appear to be much affected by these insinuations against Elizabeth ; but the doubt and the delay were very harrassing. "I would to God," wrote the English envoy, "that if the States mean to do anything here with the King, and if her Majesty and the council think it fit, they would delay no time, but go roundly either to an agreement or to a breach with the King. Otherwise, as the matter now sleepeth, so it will die, for the King must be taken in his humour when he begins to nibble at any bait, for else he will come away, and never bite a full bite while he liveth."³

There is no doubt that the bait, at which Henry nibbled

¹ Murdin, ii. 431.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

with much avidity, was the maritime part of the Netherlands. Holland and Zeeland in the possession of either England or Spain, was a perpetual inconvenience to France. The King, or rather the Queen-Mother and her advisers—for Henry himself hardly indulged in any profound reflections on state-affairs,—desired and had made a *sine qua non* of those Provinces. It had been the French policy, from the beginning, to delay matters, in order to make the States feel the peril of their position to the full.

"The King, differing and temporising," wrote Herle to the Queen, "would have them fall into that necessity and danger, as that they should offer unto him simply the possession of all their estates. Otherwise, they were to see, as in a glass, their evident and hasty ruin."¹

Even before the death of Orange, Henry had been determined, if possible, to obtain possession of the island of Walcheren, which controlled the whole country. "To give him that," said Herle, "would be to turn the hot end of the poker towards themselves, and put the cold part in the King's hand." He had accordingly made a secret offer to William of Orange, through the Princess, of two millions of livres in ready money, or, if he preferred it, one hundred thousand livres yearly of perpetual inheritance, if he would secure to him the island of Walcheren. In that case he promised to declare war upon the King of Spain, to confirm to the States their privileges, and to guarantee to the Prince the earldoms of Holland and Zeeland, with all his other lands and titles."²

¹ Herle to Queen Elizabeth, MS. before cited.

² Ibid.

³ "The French king's inward intention being discovered in some manner to them, and his faith holden suspected, Paul Buys at Delft to this effect willed me under secrecy and assurance to say unto your Majesty from him, that the said French King had two months since sounded the Prince of Orange by the Princess his wife, that in case he could be content to put into his hands the island of Walcheren, the

said King would immediately declare Spain his enemy, confirm to the States their privileges, and unto the Prince of Orange the earldoms of Holland and Zeeland, with all his other lands and titles, and give him over and above 100,000Δ* yearly of perpetual inheritance, well assured to him and his, where he would choose the same; or, if he thought better, he should stow in ready money 2,000,000Δ* to behave at his pleasure.

"But, saith Buys (his scope being once seen), he shall never be trusted

It is superfluous to say that such offers were only regarded by the Prince as an affront. It was, however, so necessary, in his opinion, to maintain the cause of the reformed churches in France, and to keep up the antagonism between that country and Spain, that the French policy was not abandoned, although the court was always held in suspicion.

But on the death of William, there was a strong reaction against France and in favour of England. Paul Buys, one of the ablest statesmen of the Netherlands, Advocate of Holland, and a confidential friend of William the Silent up to the time of his death, now became the leader of the English party, and employed his most strenuous efforts against the French treaty—having “seen the scope of that court.”¹

With regard to the other leading personages, there was a strong inclination in favour of Queen Elizabeth, whose commanding character inspired great respect. At the same time warmer sentiments of adhesion seem to have been expressed towards the French court, by the same individuals, than the mere language of compliment justified.

Thus, the widowed Princess of Orange was described by Des Pruneaux to his sovereign, as “very desolate, but nevertheless doing all in her power to advance his interests; the Count Maurice, of gentle hopes, as also most desirous of remaining his Majesty’s humble servant, while Elector Truchsess was said to be employing himself, in the same cause, with very great affection.”²

A French statesman resident in the Provinces, whose name has not been preserved, but who was evidently on intimate terms with many eminent Netherlanders, declared that Maurice, “who had a mind entirely French, deplored infinitely the misfortunes of France, and regretted that all the Provinces could not be annexed to so fair a kingdom. I do assure you,” he added, “that he is in no wise English.”³

by us, what hazard and extremity soever we run into; yet he excused the Prince that he was not French in mind, but for necessity and connivency, to conserve the churches in France, and to breed jealousy and pique between those great kings,

whereof the defence and relief of those countries and religion might ensue and be continued.” (Herle to Q. Elizabeth, MS. *ubi sup.*)

¹ Wagenaar, viii. 50.

² Groen v. Prinsterer, ‘Archives,’ &c. i. 2, 3. ³ Ibid. 15.

Of Count Hohenlo, general-in-chief of the States' army under Prince Maurice, and afterwards his brother-in-law, the same gentleman spoke with even greater confidence. "Count d'Oloc," said he (for by that ridiculous transformation of his name the German general was known to French and English), "with whom I have passed three weeks on board the fleet of the States, is now wholly French, and does not love the English at all. The very first time I saw him, he protested twice or thrice, in presence of members of the States General and of the State Council, that if he had no Frenchmen he could never carry on the war. He made more account," he said, "of two thousand French than of six thousand others, English, or Germans."¹

Yet all these distinguished persons—the widowed Princess of Orange, Count Maurice, ex-electeur Truchsess, Count Hohenlo—were described to Queen Elizabeth by her confidential agent, then employed in the Provinces, as entirely at that sovereign's devotion.

"Count Maurice holds nothing of the French, nor esteems them," said Herle, "but humbly desired me to signify unto your Majesty that he had in his mind and determination faithfully vowed his service to your Majesty, which should be continued in his actions with all duty, and sealed with his blood; for he knew how much his father and the cause were beholden ever to your Highness's goodness."²

The Princess, together with her sister-in-law Countess Schwartzenburg, and the young daughters of the late Prince were described on the same occasion "as recommending their service unto her Majesty with a most tender affection, as to a lady of all ladies." "Especially," said Herle, "did the two Princesses in most humble and wise sort, express a certain fervent devotion towards your Majesty."³

Electeur Truchsess was spoken of as "a prince well qualified and greatly devoted to her Majesty; who, after many grave and sincere words had of her Majesty's virtue, calling her

¹ Ibid.² Letter of Herle, before cited.³ Ibid.

la fille unique de Dieu, and le bien heureuse Princesse, desired of God that he might do her service as she merited."¹

And, finally, Count Hollock—who seemed to “be reformed in sundry things, if it hold” (a delicate allusion to the Count’s propensity for strong potations), was said “to desire humbly to be known for one that would obey the commandment of her Majesty more than of any earthly prince living besides.”²

There can be no doubt that there was a strong party in favour of an appeal to England rather than to France. The Netherlands were too shrewd a people not to recognize the difference between the king of a great realm, who painted his face and wore satin petticoats, and the woman who entertained ambassadors, each in his own language, on gravest affairs of state, who matched in her wit and wisdom the deepest or the most sparkling intellects of her council, who made extemporaneous Latin orations to her universities, and who rode on horseback among her generals along the lines of her troops in battle-array, and yet was only the unmarried queen of a petty and turbulent state.

“The reverend respect that is borne to your Majesty throughout these countries is great,” said William Herle. They would have thrown themselves into her arms, heart and soul, had they been cordially extended at that moment of their distress; but she was coy, hesitating, and, for reasons already sufficiently indicated, although not so conclusive as they seemed, disposed to temporize and to await the issue of the negotiations between the Provinces and France.

In Holland and Zeeland especially, there was an enthusiastic feeling in favour of the English alliance. “They recommend themselves,” said Herle, “throughout the country in their consultations and assemblies, as also in their common and private speeches, to the Queen of England’s only favour and goodness, whom they call their saviour, and the Princess of greatest perfection in wisdom and sincerity that ever governed. Notwithstanding their treaty now on foot by their deputies with France, they are not more disposed to be

¹ Letter of Herle, before cited.

² Ibid.

governed by the French than to be tyrannized over by the Spaniard; concluding it to be alike; and even *commutare non sortem sed servitutem*.”¹

Paul Buys was indefatigable in his exertions against the treaty with France, and in stimulating the enthusiasm for England and Elizabeth. He expressed sincere and unaffected devotion to the Queen on all occasions, and promised that no negotiations should take place, however secret and confidential, that were not laid before her Majesty.’ “He has the chief administration among the States,” said Herle, “and to his credit and dexterity they attribute the despatch of most things. He showed unto me the state of the enemy throughout the provinces, and of the negotiation in France, whereof he had no opinion at all of success, nor any will of his own part but to please the Prince of Orange in his life-time.”²

It will be seen in the sequel whether or not the views of this experienced and able statesman were lucid and comprehensive. It will also be seen whether his strenuous exertions in favour of the English alliance were rewarded as bountifully as they deserved, by those most indebted to him.

Meantime he was busily employed in making the English

¹ Ibid.

Sainte Aldegonde and Villiers favoured the French policy. Sainte Aldegonde was burgomaster of Antwerp, but even in that city, although so many influential persons looked to France, the people generally had more confidence in England. “The accepting of the French king as prince of these countries,” wrote Le Sieur to Walsingham, “is much sought by some that govern this day here; but in the ears of the common people it soundeth but evil, though the report be here that Holland and Zeeland have almost accepted him. If it would please her Majesty to give ear unto it, she could have the country cheap enough. Je juge que Sa Majesté auroit bon marché de ce pays.” (Le Sieur to Walsingham, 7 Sept. 1584. S. P. Office MS.)

² Treselong, too, Admiral of Holland and Zeeland, and Governor of Ostend, made no secret of his preference for England. He avowed himself publicly

her Majesty’s faithful servant. Entertaining hospitably, at his table in Ostend, Captain Richards and other English officers who had come with troops from Flushing, he pledged a bumper to the Queen’s health, and another to that of Walsingham, praying that Elizabeth might yet be his sovereign.

“Nevertheless,” said he, “I have letters from Zeeland, by which it appears that that province is about to deliver itself to the queen-mother of France.”

“And begging your pardon,” said Richards, “what towns will you give them for garrison?”

“No towns at all,” answered the Admiral, “let them lie on the dykes!” After dinner he conducted the English officers over the town, showing them the fortifications and renewing his protestations of devotion to her Majesty. (Richards to Walsingham, 9 Sept., 1584. S. P. Office MS.)

³ Letter of Herle, before cited.

government acquainted with the capacity, disposition, and general plans of the Netherlanders.

"They have certain other things in consultation amongst the States to determine of," wrote Herle, "which they were sworn not to reveal to any, but Buys protested that nothing should pass but to your liking and surety, and the same to be altered and disposed as should seem good to your Highness's own authority; affirming to me sincerely that Holland and Zeeland, with the rest of the provinces, for the estimation they had of your high virtue and temperancy, would yield themselves absolutely to your Majesty and crown for ever, or to none other (their liberties only reserved), whereof you should have immediate possession, without reservation of place or privilege."¹

The important point of the capability of the Provinces to defend themselves, about which Elizabeth was most anxious to be informed, was also fully elucidated by the Advocate. "The means should be such, proceeding from the Provinces," said he, "as your Majesty might defend your interest therein with facility against the whole world." He then indicated a plan, which had been proposed by the States of Brabant to the States General, according to which they were to keep on foot an army of 15,000 foot and 5000 horse, with which they should be able, "to expulse the enemy and to reconquer their towns and country lost, within three months." Of this army they hoped to induce the Queen to furnish 5000 English footmen and 500 horse, to be paid monthly by a treasurer of her own; and for the assistance thus to be furnished they proposed to give Ostend and Sluys as pledge of payment. According to this scheme the elector palatine, John Casimir, had promised to furnish, equip, and pay 2000 cavalry, taking the town of Maestricht and the country of Limburg, when freed from the enemy, in pawn for his disbursements; while Antwerp and Brabant had agreed to supply 300,000 crowns in ready money for immediate use. Many powerful politicians opposed this policy, however, and urged reliance upon

¹ Letter of Herle, before cited.

France, "so that this course seemed to be lame in many parts."¹

Agents had already been sent both to England and France, to procure, if possible, a levy of troops for immediate necessity. The attempt was unsuccessful in France, but the Dutch community of the reformed religion in London subscribed nine thousand and five florins.² This sum, with other contributions, proved sufficient to set Morgan's regiment on foot, which soon after began to arrive in the Netherlands by companies. "But if it were all here at once," said Stephen Le Sieur, "'t would be but a breakfast for the enemy."³

The agent for the matter in England was De Griyse, formerly bailiff of Bruges; and although tolerably successful in his mission, he was not thought competent for so important a post, nor officially authorised for the undertaking. While procuring this assistance in English troops he had been very urgent with the Queen to further the negotiations between the States and France;⁴ and Paul Buys was offended with him as a mischief-maker and an intriguer. He complained of him as having "thrust himself in, to deal and intermeddle in the affairs of the Low Countries unavowed," and desired that he might be closely looked after.⁵

After the Advocate, the next most important statesman in the provinces was, perhaps, Meetkerk, President of the High Court of Flanders, a man of much learning, sincerity, and earnestness of character; having had great experience in the diplomatic service of the country on many important occasions. "He stands second in reputation here," said Herle, "and both Buys and he have one special care in all practises that are discovered, to examine how near anything may concern your person or kingdom, whereof they will advertise as matter shall fall out in importance."⁶

John van Olden-Barneveldt, afterwards so conspicuous in the history of the country, was rather inclined, at this period, to

¹ Letter of Herle, before cited.

² Meteren, xii. 217.

³ Le Sieur to Walsingham, 7 Sept. 1684. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Meteren, xii. 217.

⁵ Letter of Herle, MS.

⁶ Ibid.

favour the French party ; a policy which was strenuously furthered by Villiers and by Sainte Aldegonde.

Besides the information furnished to the English government, as to the state of feeling and resources of the Netherlands, by Buys, Meetkerk, and William Herle, Walsingham relied much upon the experienced eye and the keen biting humour of Roger Williams.

A frank open-hearted Welshman, with no fortune but his sword, but as true as its steel, he had done the States much important service in the hard-fighting days of Grand Commander Requesens and of Don John of Austria. With a shrewd Welsh head under his iron morion, and a stout Welsh heart under his tawny doublet, he had gained little but hard knocks and a dozen wounds in his campaigning, and had but recently been ransomed, rather grudgingly by his government, from a Spanish prison in Brabant. He was suffering in health from its effects, but was still more distressed in mind, from his sagacious reading of the signs of the times. Fearing that England was growing lukewarm, and the Provinces desperate, he was beginning to find himself out of work, and was already casting about him for other employment. Poor, honest, and proud, he had repeatedly declined to enter the Spanish service. Bribes, such as at a little later period were sufficient to sully conspicuous reputations and noble names, among his countrymen in better circumstances than his own, had been freely but unsuccessfully offered him. To serve under any but the English or States' flag in the Provinces he scorned ; and he thought the opportunity fast slipping away there for taking the Papistical party in Europe handsomely by the beard. He had done much manful work in the Netherlands, and was destined to do much more ; but he was now discontented, and thought himself slighted. In more remote regions of the world, the thrifty soldier thought that there might be as good harvesting for his sword as in the thrice-trampled stubble of Flanders.

"I would refuse no hazard that is possible to be done in the Queen's service," he said to Walsingham ; "but I do

persuade myself she makes no account of me. Had it not been for the duty that nature bound me towards her and my country, I needed not to have been in that case that I am in. Perhaps I could have fingered more pistoles than Mr. Newell, the late Latiner, and had better usage and pension of the Spaniards than he. Some can tell that I refused large offers, in the misery of Alost, of the Prince of Parma. Last of all, Verdugo offered me very fair, being in Loccum, to quit the States' service, and accept theirs, without treachery or betraying of place or man."¹

Not feeling inclined to teach Latin in Spain, like the late Mr. Newell, or to violate oaths and surrender fortresses, like brave soldiers of fortune whose deeds will be afterwards chronicled, he was disposed to cultivate the "acquaintance of divers Pollacks," from which he had received invitations. "Find I nothing there," said he, "Duke Matthias has promised me courtesy if I would serve in Hungary. If not, I will offer service to one of the Turk's bashaws against the Persians."²

Fortunately, work was found for the trusty Welshman in the old fields. His brave honest face often reappeared; his sharp sensible tongue uttered much sage counsel; and his ready sword did various solid service, in leagner, battle-field, and martial debate, in Flanders, Holland, Spain, and France.

For the present, he was casting his keen glances upon the negotiations in progress, and cavilling at the general policy which seemed predominant.

He believed that the object of the French was to trifle with the States, to protract interminably their negotiations, to prevent the English government from getting any hold upon the Provinces, and then to leave them to their fate.

He advised Walsingham to advance men and money, upon the security of Sluys and Ostend.

"I dare venture my life," said he, with much energy, "that were Norris, Bingham, Yorke, or Carlisle, in those ports, he would keep them during the Spanish King's life."³

¹ Roger Williams to Sir F. Walsingham, Sept. 1584. (S. P. Office, MS.)

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

But the true way to attack Spain—a method soon afterwards to be carried into such brilliant effect by the naval heroes of England and the Netherlands—the long-sighted Welshman now indicated ; a combined attack, namely, by sea upon the colonial possessions of Philip.

“I dare be bound,” said he, “if you join with Treslong, the States’ Admiral, and send off, both, three-score sail into his Indies, we will force him to retire from conquering further, and to be contented to let other princes live as well as he.”¹

In particular, Williams urged rapid action, and there is little doubt, that had the counsels of prompt, quick-witted, ready-handed soldiers like himself, and those who thought with him, been taken ; had the stealthy but quick-darting policy of Walsingham prevailed over the solemn and stately but somewhat ponderous proceedings of Burghley, both Ghent and Antwerp might have been saved, the trifling and treacherous diplomacy of Catharine de’ Medici neutralized, and an altogether more fortunate aspect given at once to the state of Protestant affairs.

“If you mean to do anything,” said he, “it is more than time now. If you will send some man of credit about it, will it please your honour, I will go with him, because I know the humour of the people, and am acquainted with a number of the best. I shall be able to show him a number of their dealings, as well with the French as in other affairs, and perhaps will find means to send messengers to Ghent, and to other places, better than the States ; for the message of one soldier is better than twenty boors.”²

It was ultimately decided—as will soon be related—to send a man of credit to the Provinces. Meantime, the policy of England continued to be expectant and dilatory, and Advocate Buys, after having in vain attempted to conquer the French influence, and bring about the annexation of the Provinces to England, threw down his office in disgust, and retired for a time from the contest. He even contemplated

¹ Roger Williams to Sir F. Walsingham, Sept. 1584. (S. P. Office MS.)
² Ibid.

for a moment taking service in Denmark, but renounced the notion of abandoning his country, and he will accordingly be found, at a later period, conspicuous in public affairs.¹

The deliberations in the English councils were grave and anxious, for it became daily more obvious that the Netherland question was the hinge upon which the whole fate of Christendom was slowly turning. To allow the provinces to fall back again into the grasp of Philip, was to offer England herself as a last sacrifice to the Spanish Inquisition. This was felt by all the statesmen in the land ; but some of them, more than the rest, had a vivid perception of the danger, and of the necessity of dealing with it at once.

To the prophetic eye of Walsingham, the mists of the future at times were lifted ; and the countless sails of the invincible Armada, wafting defiance and destruction to England, became dimly visible. He felt that the great Netherland bulwark of Protestantism and liberty was to be defended at all hazards, and that the death-grapple could not long be deferred.

Burghley, deeply pondering, but less determined, was still disposed to look on and to temporize.

The Queen, far-seeing and anxious, but somewhat hesitating, still clung to the idea of a joint protectorate. She knew that the reestablishment of Spanish authority in the Low Countries would be fatal to England, but she was not yet prepared to throw down the gauntlet to Philip. She felt that the proposed annexation of the Provinces to France would be almost as formidable ; yet she could not resolve, frankly and fearlessly, to assume the burthen of their protection. Under the inspiration of Burghley, she was therefore willing to encourage the Netherlanders underhand ; preventing them at every hazard from slackening in their determined hostility to Spain ; discountenancing, without absolutely forbidding, their proposed absorption by France ; intimating, without promising, an ultimate and effectual assistance from herself. Meantime, with something of

¹ Wazenaar, viii. 50.

feline and feminine duplicity, by which the sex of the great sovereign would so often manifest itself in the most momentous affairs, she would watch and wait, teasing the Provinces, dallying with the danger, not quite prepared as yet to abandon the prize to Henry or Philip, or to seize it herself.

The situation was rapidly tending to become an impossible one.

Late in October a grave conference was held in the English council, "upon the question whether her Majesty should presently relieve the States of the Low Countries."

It was shown, upon one side, that the "perils to the Queen and to the realm were great, if the King of Spain should recover Holland and Zeeland, as he had the other countries, for lack of succour in seasonable time, either by the French King or the Queen's Majesty."

On the other side, the great difficulties in the way of effectual assistance by England, were "fully remembered."

"But in the end, and upon comparison made," said Lord Burghley, summing up, "betwixt the perils on the one part, and the difficulties on the other," it was concluded that the Queen would be obliged to succumb to the power of Spain, and the liberties of England be hopelessly lost, if Philip were then allowed to carry out his designs, and if the Provinces should be left without succour at his mercy.¹

A "wise person" was accordingly to be sent into Holland; first, to ascertain whether the Provinces had come to an actual

¹The report of the conference is in the State Paper Office, written in Burghley's own hand. A brief extract will give a characteristic specimen of the Lord Treasurer's style:—"But in the end, and upon comparison made betwixt the perils on the one part and the difficulties of the other, it was concluded to advise her Majesty rather to seek the avoiding and directing of the great perils, than, in respect of any difficulties, to suffer the King of Spain to grow to the full height of his de-

signs and conquests, whereby the perils were to follow so evident as if presently he were not by succouring of the Hollanders and their party impeached, the Queen's Majesty should not hereafter be any wise able to withstand the same. And therefore it was thought good that her Majesty should send presently some wise person into Holland," &c. (Holland Correspondence, S. P. Office, Oct. 10, 1584, M.S.)

agreement with the King of France, and, if such should prove to be the case, to enquire whether that sovereign had pledged himself to declare war upon Philip. In this event, the wise person was to express her Majesty's satisfaction that the Provinces were thus to be "relieved from the tyranny of the King of Spain."

On the other hand, if it should appear that no such conclusive arrangements had been made, and that the Provinces were likely to fall again victims to the "Spanish tyranny," her Majesty would then "strain herself as far as, with preservation of her own estate, she might, to succour them at this time."¹

The agent was then to ascertain "what conditions the Provinces would require" upon the matter of succour, and, if the terms seemed reasonable, he would assure them that "they should not be left to the cruelties of the Spaniards."

And further, the wise person, "being pressed to answer, might by conference of speeches and persuasions provoke them to offer to the Queen the ports of Flushing and Middelburg and the Brill, wherein she meant not to claim any property, but to hold them as gages for her expenses, and for performances of their covenants."

He was also to make minute inquiries as to the pecuniary resources of the Provinces, the monthly sums which they would be able to contribute, the number of troops and of ships of war that they would pledge themselves to maintain. These investigations were very important, because the Queen, although very well disposed to succour them, "so nevertheless she was to consider how her power might be extended, without ruin or manifest peril to her own estate."

It was also resolved, in the same conference, that a preliminary step of great urgency was to "procure a good peace with the King of Scots." Whatever the expense of bringing about such a pacification might be, it was certain that a "great deal more would be expended in defending the realm

¹ Holland Correspondence. S. P. Office, Oct. 10, 1584, MS.

against Scotland," while England was engaged in hostilities with Spain. Otherwise, it was argued that her Majesty would be "so impeached by Scotland in favour of the King of Spain, that her action against that King would be greatly weakened."

Other measures necessary to be taken in view of the Spanish war were also discussed. The ex-electeur of Cologne, "a man of great account in Germany," was to be assisted with money to make head against his rival supported by the troops of Philip.

Duke Casimir of the Palatinate was to be solicited to make a diversion in Gelderland.

The King of France was to be reminded of his treaty with England for mutual assistance in case of the invasion by a foreign power of either realm, and to be informed "not only of the intentions of the Spaniards to invade England, upon their conquest of the Netherlands, but of their actual invasion of Ireland."

It was "to be devised how the King of Navarre and Don Antonio of Portugal, for their respective titles, might be induced to offend and occupy the King of Spain, whereby to diminish his forces bent upon the Low Countries."

It was also decided that Parliament should be immediately summoned, in which, besides the request of a subsidy, many other necessary provisions should be made for her Majesty's safety.

"The conclusions of the whole," said Lord Burghley, with much earnestness, "was this. Although her Majesty should hereby enter into a war presently, yet were she better to do it now, while she may make the same out of her realm, having the help of the people of Holland, and before the King of Spain shall have consummated his conquests in those countries, whereby he shall be so provoked with pride, solicited by the Pope, and tempted by the Queen's own subjects, and shall be so strong by sea, and so free from all other actions and quarrels,—yea, shall be so formidable to all the rest of Christendom, as that her Majesty shall no wise be

able, with her own power, nor with aid of any other, neither by sea nor land, to withstand his attempts, but shall be forced to give place to his insatiable malice, which is most terrible to be thought of, but miserable to suffer.”¹

Thus did the Lord Treasurer wisely, eloquently, and well, describe the danger by which England was environed. Through the shield of Holland the spear was aimed full at the heart of England. But was it a moment to linger? Was that buckler to be suffered to fall to the ground, or to be raised only upon the arm of a doubtful and treacherous friend? Was it an hour when the protection of Protestantism and of European liberty against Spain was to be entrusted to the hand of a feeble and priest-ridden Valois? Was it wise to indulge any longer in doubtings and dreamings, and in yet a little more folding of the arms to sleep, while that insatiable malice, so terrible to be thought of, so miserable to feel, was growing hourly more formidable, and approaching nearer and nearer?

Early in December, William Davison, gentleman-in-ordinary of her Majesty's household, arrived at the Hague; a man painstaking, earnest, and zealous, but who was fated, on more than one great occasion, to be made a scape-goat for the delinquencies of greater personages than himself.

He had audience of the States General on the 8th December. He then informed that body that the Queen had heard, with sorrowful heart, of the great misfortunes which the United Provinces had sustained since the death of the Prince of Orange; the many cities which they had lost, and the disastrous aspect of the common cause. Moved by the affection which she had always borne the country, and anxious for its preservation, she had ordered her ambassador Stafford to request the King of France to undertake, jointly with herself, the defence of the provinces against the King of Spain. Not till very lately, however, had that envoy succeeded in obtaining an audience, and he had then received “a very cold answer.” It being obvious to her Majesty, therefore, that

¹ MS. Report of Burghley, before cited.

the French government intended to protract these matters indefinitely, Davison informed the States that she had commissioned him to offer them "all possible assistance, to enquire into the state of the country, and to investigate the proper means of making that assistance most useful." He accordingly requested the appointment of a committee to confer with him upon the subject; and declared that the Queen did not desire to make herself mistress of the Provinces, but only to be informed how she best could aid their cause.¹

A committee was accordingly appointed, and a long series of somewhat concealed negotiations was commenced. As the deputies were upon the eve of their departure for France, to offer the sovereignty of the Provinces to Henry, these proceedings were necessarily confused, dilatory, and at times contradictory.

After the arrival of the deputies in France, the cunctative policy inspired by the Lord Treasurer was continued by England. The delusion of a joint protectorate was still clung to by the Queen, although the conduct of France was becoming very ambiguous, and suspicion growing darker as to the ultimate and secret purport of the negotiations in progress.²

The anxiety and jealousy of Elizabeth were becoming keener than ever. If the offers to the King were unlimited, he would accept them, and would thus become as dangerous as Philip. If they were unsatisfactory, he would turn his back upon the Provinces, and leave them a prey to Philip.³ Still she would not yet renounce the hope of bringing the French King over to an ingenuous course of action. It was thought, too, that something might be done with the great malcontent nobles of Flanders, whose defection from the national cause had been so disastrous, but who had been much influenced in their course, it was thought, by their jealousy of William the Silent.

¹ Register van de Resolutien der Staten General, 8 Dec. 1584. (Hague Archives MS.)

² Queen to W. Davison, 14 Jan. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Ibid.

Now that the Prince was dead, it was thought probable that the Arschots, and Havres, Chimays, and Lalaings, might arouse themselves to more patriotic views than they had manifested when they espoused the cause of Spain.

It would be desirable to excite their jealousy of French influence, and, at the same time, to inspire throughout the popular mind the fear of another tyranny almost as absolute as that of Spain. "And if it be objected," said Burghley, "that except they shall admit the French King to the *absolute dominion*, he will not aid them, and they, for lack of succour, be forced to yield to the Spaniard, it may be answered that rather than they should be wholly subjected to the French, or overcome by the Spaniard, her Majesty would yield unto them as much as, with preservation of her estate, and defence of her own country, might be demanded."¹

The real object kept in view by the Queen's government was, in short, to obtain for the Provinces and for the general cause of liberty the greatest possible amount of assistance from Henry, and to allow him to acquire in return the least possible amount of power. The end proposed was a reasonable one, but the means employed savoured too much of intrigue.

"It may be easily made probable to the States," said the Lord Treasurer, "that the government of the French is likely to prove as cumbersome and perilous as that of the Spaniards; and likewise it may probably be doubted how the French will keep touch and covenants with them, when any opportunity shall be offered to break them; so that her Majesty thinketh no good can be looked for to those countries by yielding this large authority to the French. If they shall continue their title by this grant to be absolute lords, there is no end, for a long time, to be expected of this war; and, contrariwise, if they break off, there is an end of any good composition with the King of Spain."²

Shivering and shrinking, but still wading in deeper and deeper, inch by inch, the cautious minister was fast finding

¹ MS. *ubi sup.*

² Ibid.

himself too far advanced to retreat. He was rarely decided, however, and never lucid ; and least of all in emergencies, when decision and lucidity would have been more valuable than any other qualities.

Deeply doubting, painfully balancing, he at times drove the unfortunate Davison almost distraught. Puzzled himself and still more puzzling to others, he rarely permitted the Netherlands, or even his own agents, to perceive his drift. It was fair enough, perhaps, to circumvent the French government by its own arts, but the Netherlands meanwhile were in danger of sinking into despair.

"Thus," wrote the Lord Treasurer to the envoy, "I have discoursed to you of these uncertainties and difficulties, things not unknown to yourself, but now being imparted to you by her Majesty's commandment, you are, by your wisdom, to consider with whom to deal for the stay of this French course, and yet, so to use it (as near as you may) that they of the French faction there be not able to charge you therewith, by advertising into France. For it hath already appeared, by some speeches past between our ambassador there and Des Pruneaux, that you are had in some jealousy as a hinderer of this French course, and at work for her Majesty to have some entrance and partage in that country. Nevertheless our ambassador, by his answer, hath satisfied them to think the contrary."¹

They must have been easily satisfied, if they knew as much of the dealings of her Majesty's government as the reader already knows. To inspire doubt of the French, to insinuate the probability of their not "keeping touch and covenant," to represent their rule as "cumbersome and perilous," was wholesome conduct enough towards the Netherlands—and still more so, had it been accompanied with frank offers of assistance—but it was certainly somewhat to "hinder the courses of the French."

But in truth all parties were engaged for a season in a round game of deception, in which nobody was deceived.

¹ MS. last cited.

Walsingham was impatient, almost indignant at this puerility. "Your doings, no doubt of it," he wrote to Davison, "are observed by the French faction, and therefore *you cannot proceed so closely but it will be espied*. Howsoever it be, *seeing direction groweth from hence, we cannot but blame ourselves*, if the effects thereof do not fall out to our liking."¹

That sagacious statesman was too well informed, and too much accustomed to penetrate the designs of his antagonists, to expect anything from the present intrigues.

To loiter thus, when mortal blows should be struck, was to give the Spanish government exactly that of which it was always most gluttonous—time; and the Netherlanders had none of it to spare. "With time and myself, there are two of us," was Philip II.'s favourite observation; and the Prince of Parma was at this moment sorely perplexed by the parsimony and the hesitations of his own government, by which his large, swift and most creative genius was so often hampered.

Thus the Spanish soldiers, deep in the trenches, went with bare legs and empty stomachs in January; and the Dutchmen, among their broken dykes, were up to their ears in mud and water; and German mercenaries, in the obedient Provinces, were burning the peasants' houses in order to sell the iron to buy food withal;² while grave-visaged statesmen, in comfortable cabinets, wagged their long white beards at each other from a distance, and exchanged grimaces and protocols which nobody heeded.

Walsingham was weary of this solemn trifling. "I conclude," said he to Davison, "that her Majesty—with reverence be it spoken—is ill advised, to direct you in a course that is like to work so great peril. I know you will do your best endeavour to keep all things upright, and yet it is hard—the disease being now come to this state, or, as the physicians term it, crisis—to carry yourself in such sort, but that it will, I fear, breed a dangerous alteration in the cause."³

¹ Walsingham to Davison, 14 Jan. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

1584. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Richards to Walsingham, Sept. 9,

³ Walsingham to Davison. (MS. before cited.)

He denounced with impatience, almost with indignation, the insincerity and injustice of these intolerable hesitations. "Sorry am I," said he, "to see the course that is taken in this weighty cause, *for we will neither help those poor countries ourselves, nor yet suffer others to do it.* I am not ignorant that in time to come the annexing of these countries to the crown of France may prove prejudicial to England, but if France refuse to deal with them, *and the rather for that we shall minister some cause of impediment by a kind of dealing underhand,* then shall they be forced to return into the hands of Spain, which is like to breed such a present peril towards her Majesty's self, *as never a wise man that seeth it, and loveth her, but lamenteth it from the bottom of his heart.*"¹

Walsingham had made up his mind that it was England, not France, that should take up the cause of the Provinces, and defend them at every hazard. He had been overruled, and the Queen's government had decided to watch the course of the French negotiation, doing what it could, underhand, to prevent that negotiation from being successful. The Secretary did not approve of this disingenuous course. At the same time he had no faith in the good intentions of the French court.

"I could wish," said he, "that the French King were carried with that honourable mind into the defence of these countries that her Majesty is, but France has not been used to do things for God's sake; neither do they mean to use our advice or assistance in making of the bargain. For they still hold a jealous conceit that when Spain and they are together by the ears, we will seek underhand to work our own peace." Walsingham, therefore, earnestly deprecated the attitude provisionally maintained by England.

Meantime, early in January, the deputation from the Provinces had arrived in France. The progress of their
 1585. negotiation will soon be related, but, before its result was known, a general dissatisfaction had already manifested itself in the Netherlands. The factitious enthusiasm which

¹ Walsingham to Davison, MS. before cited.

² Ibid.

had been created in favour of France, as well as the prejudice against England, began to die out. It became probable in the opinion of those most accustomed to read the signs of the times, that the French court was acting in connivance with Philip, and that the negotiation was only intended to amuse the Netherlands, to circumvent the English, and to gain time both for France and Spain. It was not believed that the character of Henry or the policy of his mother was likely to be the source of any substantial aid to the cause of civil liberty or Protestant principles.

"They look for no better fruit from the commission to France," wrote Davison, who surveyed the general state of affairs with much keenness and breadth of vision, "than a dallying entertainment of the time,—neither leaving them utterly hopeless, nor at full liberty to seek for relief elsewhere, especially in England,—or else some pleasing motion of peace, wherein the French King will offer his mediation with Spain. Meantime the people, wearied with the troubles, charges, and hazard of the war, shall be rocked asleep, the provision for their defence neglected, some Provinces nearest the danger seduced, the rest by their defection astonished, and the enemy by their decay and confusions, strengthened. This is the scope whereto the doings of the French King, not without intelligence with the Spanish sovereign, doth aim, whatever is pretended."¹

There was a wide conviction that the French King was dealing falsely with the Provinces. It seemed certain that he must be inspired by intense jealousy of England, and that he was unlikely, for the sake of those whose "religion, popular liberty, and rebellion against their sovereign," he could not but disapprove, to allow Queen Elizabeth to steal a march upon him, and "make her own market with Spain to his cost and disadvantage."²

In short, it was suspected—whether justly or not will be presently shown—that Henry III. "was seeking to blear the eyes of the world, as his brother Charles did before the

¹ Davison to Walsingham, 12 Feb. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

² *Ibid.*

Massacre of St. Bartholomew.”¹ As the letters received from the Dutch envoys in France became less and less encouraging, and as the Queen was informed by her ambassador in Paris of the tergiversations in Paris, she became the more anxious lest the States should be driven to despair. She therefore wrote to Davison, instructing him “to nourish in them underhand some hope—as a thing proceeding from himself—that though France should reject them, yet she would not abandon them.”²

He was directed to find out, by circuitous means, what towns they would offer to her as security for any advances she might be induced to make, and to ascertain the amount of monthly contributions towards the support of the war that they were still capable of furnishing. She was beginning to look with dismay at the expatriation of wealthy merchants and manufacturers going so rapidly forward, now that Ghent had fallen and Brussels and Antwerp were in such imminent peril. She feared that, while so much valuable time had been thrown away, the Provinces had become too much impoverished to do their own part in their own defence; and she was seriously alarmed at rumours which had become prevalent of a popular disposition towards treating for a peace at any price with Spain. It soon became evident that these rumours were utterly without foundation, but the other reasons for Elizabeth’s anxiety were sufficiently valid.

On the whole, the feeling in favour of England was rapidly gaining ground. In Holland especially there was general indignation against the French party. The letters of the deputies occasioned “murmur and dislike” of most persons, who noted them to contain more ample report of ceremonies and compliments than solid argument of comfort.”³

Sir Edward Stafford, who looked with great penetration into the heart of the mysterious proceedings at Paris, assured his government that no better result was to be looked for, “after long dalliance and entertainment, than either a flat

¹ Davison to Walsingham, *ubi. sup.*

² Queen to Davison, 18 Feb. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Davison to Lord Burghley and Sir F. Walsingham, 28 Feb. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

refusal or such a masked embracing of their cause, as would rather tend to the increasing of their miseries and confusion than relief for their declining estate." While "reposing upon a broken reed," they were, he thought, "neglecting other means more expedient for their necessities."¹

This was already the universal opinion in Holland. Men now remembered, with bitterness, the treachery of the Duke of Anjou, which they had been striving so hard to forget, but which less than two years ago had nearly proved fatal to the cause of liberty in the Provinces. A committee of the States had an interview with the Queen's envoy at the Hague; implored her Majesty through him not to abandon their cause; expressed unlimited regret for the course which had been pursued, and avowed a determination "to pluck their heads out of the collar," so soon as the opportunity should offer.²

They stated, moreover, that they had been directed by the assembly to lay before him the instructions for the envoys to France, and the articles proposed for the acceptance of the King. The envoy knew his business better than not to have secretly provided himself with copies of these documents, which he had already laid before his own government.

He affected, however, to feel hurt that he had been thus kept in ignorance of papers which he really knew by heart. "After some pretended quarrel," said he, "for their not acquainting me therewith sooner, I did accept them, as if I had before neither seen nor heard of them."³

This then was the aspect of affairs in the provinces during the absence of the deputies in France. It is now necessary to shift the scene to that country.

¹ Davison to Burghley and Walsingham *ubi sup.*

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER IV.

Reception of the Dutch Envoys at the Louvre — Ignominious Result of the Embassy — Secret Influences at work — Bargaining between the French and Spanish Courts — Claims of Catharine de' Medici upon Portugal — Letters of Henry and Catharine — Secret Proposal by France to invade England — States' Mission to Henry of Navarre — Subsidies of Philip to Guise — Treaty of Joinville — Philip's Share in the League denied by Parma — Philip in reality its Chief — Manifesto of the League — Attitude of Henry III. and of Navarre — The League demands a Royal Decree — Designs of France and Spain against England — Secret Interview of Mendoza and Villeroy — Complaints of English Persecution — Edict of Nemours — Excommunication of Navarre and his Reply.

THE King, notwithstanding his apparent reluctance, had, in Sir Edward Stafford's language, "nibbled at the bait." He had, however, not been secured at the first attempt, and now a second effort was to be made, under what were supposed to be most favourable circumstances. In accordance with his own instructions, his envoy, Des Pruneaux, had been busily employed in the States, arranging the terms of a treaty which should be entirely satisfactory. It had been laid down as an indispensable condition that Holland and Zeeland should unite in the offer of sovereignty, and, after the expenditure of much eloquence, diplomacy, and money, Holland and Zeeland had given their consent. The court had been for some time anxious and impatient for the arrival of the deputies. Early in December, Des Pruneaux wrote from Paris to Count Maurice, urging with some asperity, the necessity of immediate action.

"When I left you," he said, "I thought that performance would follow promises. I have been a little ashamed, as the time passed by, to hear nothing of the deputies, nor of any excuse on the subject. It would seem as though God had bandaged the eyes of those who have so much cause to know their own adversity."¹

¹ Groen v. Prinsterer, 'Archives,' &c. i. 7.

To the States his language was still more insolent. "Excuse me, Gentlemen," he said, "if I tell you that I blush at hearing nothing from you. I shall have the shame and you the damage. I regret much the capture of De Teligny, and other losses which are occasioned by your delays and want of resolution."

Thus did the French court, which a few months before had imprisoned, and then almost ignominiously dismissed the envoys who came to offer the sovereignty of the Provinces, now rebuke the governments which had ever since been strenuously engaged in removing all obstacles to the entire fulfillment of the King's demands. The States were just despatching a solemn embassy to renew that offer, with hardly any limitation as to terms.¹

The envoys arrived on January 3rd, 1585, at Boulogne, after a stormy voyage from Brielle. Yet it seems incredible to relate, that, after all the ignominy heaped upon the last, there was nothing but solemn trifling in reserve for the present legation; although the object of both embassies was to offer a crown. The deputies were, however, not kept in prison, upon this occasion, nor treated like thieves or spies. They were admirably lodged, with plenty of cooks and lacqueys to minister to them; they fared sumptuously every day, at Henry's expense, and, after they had been six weeks in the kingdom, they at last succeeded in obtaining their first audience.

On the 13th February the King sent five "very splendid, richly-gilded, court-coach-waggons" to bring the envoys to the palace. At one o'clock they arrived at the Louvre, and were

¹ The deputies were appointed from each of the United Provinces: Merode, Hinkaert, Stralen, and Cornelius Aerssens represented Brabant; Chancellor Leoninus, John van Ghent, and Gerard Voet were appointed from Gelderland; Noel de Caron was deputy for Flanders, Arend van Dorp for Holland, John Valcke for Zeeland, Bengers and Amelis van Amstel for Utrecht, Teitsma and Aisma for Friesland, Le Mouillierie and Le Pré

for Mechlin. The Prince of Espinoy, brother of the Marquis of Richebourg, but a patriotic Netherlander himself, was also commissioned to be of the legation, and he served at his own expense. (Wagenaar, viii. 55, 56; 'Des Pruneaux aux Etats generaux,' 3rd Dec. 1584, Hague Archives, MS.; 'Brief van de Gedeputeerden in Frankryck aan de Staten Gen.' 19th Jan. 1585, Hague Archives, MS.)

ushered through four magnificent antechambers into the royal cabinet. The apartments through which they passed swarmed with the foremost nobles, court-functionaries, and ladies of France, in blazing gala costume, who all greeted the envoys with demonstrations of extreme respect. The halls and corridors were lined with archers, halbardiers, Swiss guards, and grooms "besmeared with gold," and it was thought that all this rustle of fine feathers would be somewhat startling to the barbarous republicans, fresh from the fens of Holland.

Henry received them in his cabinet, where he was accompanied only by the Duke of Joyeuse—his foremost and bravest "minion"—by the Count of Bouscaige, M. de Valette, and the Count of Château Vieux.¹

The most Christian King was neatly dressed, in white satin doublet and hose, and well-starched ruff, with a short cloak on his shoulders, a little velvet cap on the side of his head, his long locks duly perfumed and curled, his sword at his side, and a little basket, full of puppies, suspended from his neck by a broad ribbon. He held himself stiff and motionless, although his face smiled a good-humoured welcome to the ambassadors; and he moved neither foot, hand, nor head, as they advanced.

Chancellor Leoninus, the most experienced, eloquent, and tedious of men, now made an interminable oration, fertile in rhetoric and barren in facts; and the King made a short and benignant reply, according to the hallowed formula in such cases provided. And then there was a presentation to the Queen, and to the Queen-Mother, when Leoninus was more prolix than before, and Catharine even more affectionate than her son; and there were consultations with Chiverny and Villeroy, and Brulart and Pruneaux, and great banquets at the royal expense, and bales of protocols, and drafts of articles, and conditions and programmes and apostilles by the hundred weight, and at last articles of annexation were presented by the envoys, and Pruneaux looked at and pronounced them "too raw and imperative," and the envoys took them home

¹ MS. Letter of the Envoys, before cited.

again, and dressed them and cooked them till there was no substance left in them ; for whereas the envoys originally offered the crown of their country to France, on condition that no religion but the reformed religion should be tolerated there, no appointments made but by the States, and no security offered for advances to be made by the Christian King, save the hearts and oaths of his new subjects—so they now ended by proposing the sovereignty unconditionally, almost abjectly ; and, after the expiration of nearly three months, even these terms were absolutely refused, and the deputies were graciously permitted to go home as they came. The annexation and sovereignty were definitely declined. Henry regretted and sighed, Catharine de' Medici wept—for tears were ever at her command—Chancellor Chiverny and Secretary Brulart wept likewise, and Pruneaux was overcome with emotion at the parting interview of the ambassadors with the court, in which they were allowed a last opportunity for expressing what was called their gratitude.

And then, on the 16th March, M. d'Oignon came to them, and presented, on the part of the King, to each of the envoys a gold chain weighing twenty-one ounces and two grains.¹

Des Pruneaux, too—Des Pruneaux who had spent the previous summer in the Netherlands, who had travelled from province to province, from city to city, at the King's command, offering boundless assistance, if they would unanimously offer their sovereignty ; who had vanquished by his importunity the resistance of the stern Hollanders, the last of all the Netherlanders to yield to the royal blandishments—Des Pruneaux, who had “blushed”—Des Pruneaux who had wept—now thought proper to assume an airy tone, half encouragement, half condolence.

“Man proposes, gentlemen,” said he,² “but God disposes. We are frequently called on to observe that things have a

¹ MS. Report of the Envoys.

² “Messieurs, les hommes proposent, et Dieu est le maître qui dispose. Nous voyons toutes choses avoir différents temps et termes ; Prou sont

refusées d'une femme deux fois qu'y l'emportent la troisieme,” &c. (‘Des Pruneaux aux Etats generaux,’ 14th Mar. 1585, Brienne, MS.)

great variety of times and terms. Many a man is refused by a woman twice, who succeeds the third time," and so on, with which wholesome apothegms Des Pruneaux faded away then and for ever from the page of Netherland history.

In a few days afterwards the envoys took shipping at Dieppe, and arrived early in April at the Hague.¹

And thus terminated the negotiation of the States with France.

It had been a scene of elaborate trifling on the King's part from beginning to end. Yet the few grains of wheat which have thus been extracted from the mountains of diplomatic chaff so long mouldering in national storehouses, contain, however dry and tasteless, still something for human nourishment. It is something to comprehend the ineffable meanness of the hands which then could hold the destiny of mighty empires. Here had been offered a magnificent prize to France; a great extent of frontier in the quarter where expansion was most desirable, a protective network of towns and fortresses on the side most vulnerable, flourishing cities on the sea-coast where the marine traffic was most lucrative, the sovereignty of a large population, the most bustling, enterprising, and hardy in Europe—a nation destined in a few short years to become the first naval and commercial power in the world—all this was laid at the feet of Henry Valois and Catharine de' Medici, and rejected.

The envoys, with their predecessors, had wasted eight months of most precious time; they had heard and made orations, they had read and written protocols, they had witnessed banquets, masquerades, and revels of stupendous frivolity, in honour of the English Garter, brought solemnly to the Valois by Lord Derby, accompanied by one hundred gentlemen "marvellously, sumptuously, and richly accoutred," during that dreadful winter when the inhabitants of Brussels, Antwerp, Mechlin—to save which splendid cities and to annex them to France, was a main object of the solemn embassy from the Netherlands—were eating rats, and cats, and dogs,

¹ MS. Report, Wagenaar, viii. 66.

and the weeds from the pavements, and the grass from the churchyards ; and were finding themselves more closely pressed than ever by the relentless genius of Farnese ; and in exchange for all these losses and all this humiliation, the ambassadors now returned to their constituents, bringing an account of Chiverny's magnificent banquets and long orations, of the smiles of Henry III., the tears of Catharine de' Medici, the regrets of M. des Pruneaux, besides sixteen gold chains, each weighing twenty-one ounces and two grains.¹

It is worth while to go for a moment behind the scenes, We have seen the actors, with mask and cothurn and tinsel crown, playing their well-conned parts upon the stage. Let us hear them threaten, and whimper, and chaffer among themselves.

So soon as it was intimated that Henry III. was about to grant the Netherland envoys an audience, the wrath of ambassador Mendoza was kindled. That magniloquent Spaniard instantly claimed an interview with the King, before whom, according to the statement of his colleagues,

¹ Brieven van de Gedeputeerden ytt Paris, 22nd Feb. 1585 ; Rapport van de Handeling gebouden by de Gesanten, &c. ; Brief van de Gezanten ytt Paris, 11 Maart, 1585. (Hague Archives MS.) Compare De Thou, ix. 275, seq. ; Strada, II. 292, seq. ; Meteren, xii. 221, seq. ; Le Petit, II. xiv. 508, seq. ; Wagenaar, viii. 58 ; Bor, II. xix. 528, seq.

It is remarkable, that in all the conferences between the deputies and the ministers of Henry, and in all the expressions used by the King and his mother, as recorded by the envoys in their despatches and reports, no allusion was ever made to the civil war then brewing in France, nor to the machinations of the Guises,—*the name of which family was never mentioned.* The Court excused itself, as well as it could, for its elaborate trifling with the Netherlands, at so momentous an epoch, by general reflections upon the condition of France, and the inconvenience to the government at that moment, of engaging in the enterprize

which it had itself solicited. All the contemporaneous historians, whether Protestant or Catholic, French, Flemish, or Spanish, give a very brief, imperfect, conventional, and generally mistaken view of these negotiations.

Le Petit, instead of the meagre farewell address of the King (which we have given in the text from the report of the envoys to their constituents) does not scruple to invent a very epigrammatic little speech for Henry, in which that monarch is made to complain bitterly of the "violence done to him by the King of Spain, the Guise family, and the leaguers," to regret that he is thereby prevented from assisting the Provinces, on the ground that "his shirt is nearer to him than his doublet," and to hope that they will sustain themselves until he shall have got his kingdom quiet, after which the States may depend upon his assistance. It is superfluous to say that this and similar harangues recorded by various historians are purely imaginary.

doing their best to pry into these secrets, he blustered and bounced, and was more fantastical in his insolence than even Spanish envoy had ever been before.

"He went presently to court," so Walsingham was informed by Stafford, "and dealt very passionately with the King and Queen-Mother to deny them audience, who being greatly offended with his presumptuous and malapert manner of proceeding, the King did in choler and with some sharp speeches, let him plainly understand that he was an absolute king, bound to yield account of his doings to no man, and that it was lawful for him to give access to any man within his own realm. The Queen-Mother answered him likewise very roundly, whereupon he departed for the time, very much discontented."¹

Brave words, on both sides, if they had ever been spoken, or if there had been any action corresponding to their spirit.

But, in truth, from the beginning, Henry and his mother saw in the Netherland embassy only the means of turning a dishonest penny. Since the disastrous retreat of Anjou from the Provinces, the city of Cambray had remained in the hands of the Seigneur de Balagny, placed there by the duke. The citadel, garrisoned by French troops, it was not the intention of Catharine de' Medici to restore to Philip, and a truce on the subject had been arranged provisionally for a year. Philip, taking Parma's advice to prevent the French court, if possible, from "fomenting the Netherland rebellion," had authorized the Prince to conclude that truce, as if done on his own responsibility, and not by royal order.² Meantime, Balagny was gradually swelling into a petty potentate, on his own account, making himself very troublesome to the Prince of Parma, and requiring a great deal of watching. Cambray was however apparently acquired for France.

¹ Walsingham to Davison, ¹⁴/₂₄ Jan. 1585, S. P. Office MS. Compare De Thou, ix. 275, *seq.*; Strada, 'De Bello Belgico,' 1658, ii. 592, *seq.*; Meteren, xii. 221, *seq.*; Le Petit, II. xiv. 508, *seq.*; Busbequius, 'Epist.' *passim*.

² Philip II. to Prince of Parma, 2nd Sept. 1584, and 15th Jan. 1585. (Archivo de Simancas MS. "Sera bien que la concluyais à trueque de conseguir esto con que no parezca orden mia sino que lo haceis como de vuestro," &c. Comp. Strada, II. 295.

But, besides this acquisition, there was another way of earning something solid, by turning this Netherland matter handsomely to account. Philip II. had recently conquered Portugal. Among the many pretensions to that crown, those of Catharine de' Medici had been put forward, but had been little heeded. The claim went back more than three hundred years, and to establish its validity would have been to convert the peaceable possession of a long line of sovereigns into usurpation. To ascend to Alphonso III. was like fetching, as it was said, a claim from Evander's grandmother. Nevertheless, ever since Philip had been upon the Portuguese throne, Catharine had been watching the opportunity, not of unseating that sovereign, but of converting her claim into money.

The Netherland embassy seemed to offer the coveted opportunity. There was, therefore, quite as much warmth at the outset, on the part of Mendoza, in that first interview after the arrival of the deputies, as had been represented. There was however less dignity and more cunning on the part of Henry and Catharine than was at all suspected. Even before that conference the King had been impatiently expecting overtures from the Spanish envoy, and had been disappointed. "He told me," said Henry, "that he would make proposals so soon as Tassis should be gone, but he has done nothing yet. He said to Gondi that all he meant was to get the truce of Cambray accomplished. I hope, however, that my brother, the King of Spain, will do what is right in regard to madam my mother's pretensions. 'Tis likely that he will be now incited thereto, seeing that the deputies of all the Netherland provinces are at present in my kingdom, to offer me *carte blanche*. I shall hear what they have to say, and do exactly what the good of my own affairs shall seem to require. The Queen of England, too, has been very pressing and urgent with me for several months on this subject. I shall hear, too, what she has to say, and I presume, if the King of Spain will now disclose himself, and do promptly what he ought, that we may set Christendom at rest."¹

¹ Henry III. & Longlée, 11 Jan. 1585, Brienne MS.

Henry then instructed his ambassador in Spain to keep his eyes wide open, in order to penetrate the schemes of Philip, and to this end ordered him an increase of salary by a third, that he might follow that monarch on his journey to Arragon.

Meanwhile Mendoza had audience of his Majesty. "He made a very pressing remonstrance," said the King, "concerning the arrival of these deputies, urging me to send them back at once; denouncing them as disobedient rebels and heretics. I replied that my kingdom was free, and that I should hear from them all that they had to say, *because I could not abandon madam my mother in her pretensions, not only for the filial obedience which I owe her, but because I am her only heir*. Mendoza replied that he should go and make the same remonstrance to the Queen-Mother, which he accordingly did, and she will herself write you what passed between them. If they do not act up to their duty *down there* I know how to take my revenge upon them."¹

This is the King's own statement—his veriest words—and he was surely best aware of what occurred between himself and Mendoza, under their four eyes only. The ambassador is not represented as extremely insolent, but only pressing; and certainly there is little left of the fine periods on Henry's part about listening to the cry of the oppressed, or preventing the rays of his ancestors' diadem from growing pale, with which contemporary chronicles are filled.

There was not one word of the advancement and glory of the French nation; not a hint of the fame to be acquired by a magnificent expansion of territory, still less of the duty to deal generously or even honestly with an oppressed people, who in good faith were seeking an asylum in exchange for offered sovereignty, not a syllable upon liberty of conscience, of religious or civil rights; nothing but a petty and exclusive care for the interests of his mother's pocket, and of his own as his mother's heir. This farthing-candle was alone to guide the steps of "the high and mighty King," whose reputation was perpetually represented as so precious to him in all the conferences between

¹ Henry III. à Longlée, 11 Jan., 1585, Brienne MS.

his ministers and the Netherland deputies. Was it possible for those envoys to imagine the almost invisible meanness of such childish tricks?

The Queen-Mother was still more explicit and unblushing throughout the whole affair.

"The ambassador of Spain," she said, "has made the most beautiful remonstrances he could think of about these deputies from the Netherlands. All his talk, however, cannot persuade me to anything else save to increase my desire to have reparation for the wrong that has been done me in regard to my claims upon Portugal, which I am determined to pursue by every means within my power. Nevertheless I have told Don Bernardino that I should always be ready to embrace any course likely to bring about a peaceful conclusion. He then entered into a discussion of my rights, which, he said, were not thought in Spain to be founded in justice. But when I explained to him the principal points (of which I possess all the pieces of evidence and justification), he hardly knew what to say, save that he was astounded that I had remained so long without speaking of my claims. In reply, I told him ingenuously the truth."¹

The truth which the ingenuous Catharine thus revealed was, in brief, that all her predecessors had been minors, women, and persons in situations not to make their rights valid. Finding herself more highly placed, she had advanced her claims, which had been so fully recognized in Portugal, that she had been received as Infanta of the kingdom. All pretensions to the throne being now through women only, hers were the best of any. At all this Don Bernardino expressed profound astonishment, and promised to send a full account to his master of "the infinite words" which had passed between them at this interview.²

¹ 'Lettre de la Reine à Longlée,' 16 Jan. 1585. 'Brienne MS.' "Il ne m'a secu que dire aultre chose, sinon qu'il s'ebahissoit comme j'avois si long temps demouré sans parler de mes d'ctz droitz, a quoi je luy ay respondu

ingenument la verité, qui est," &c.

² Ibid. "Et croy qu'il n'y obmastra rien d'infinies parolles que se sont passees de la substance dessus dicte en la dicte audience," &c.

"I desire," said Catharine, "that the Lord King of Spain should open his mind frankly and promptly upon the recompense which he is willing to make me for Portugal, in order that things may pass rather with gentleness than otherwise."

It was expecting a great deal to look for frankness and promptness from the Lord King of Spain, but the Queen-Mother considered that the Netherland envoys had put a whip into her hand. She was also determined to bring Philip up to the point, without showing her own game. "I will never say," said Catharine—ingenuous no longer—"I will never say how much I ask, but, on the contrary, I shall wait for him to make the offer. I expect it to be reasonable, because he has seen fit to seize and occupy that which I declare to be my property."¹

This is the explanation of all the languor and trifling of the French court in the Netherland negotiation. A deep, constant, unseen current was running counter to all the movement which appeared upon the surface. The tergiversations of the Spanish cabinet in the Portugal matter were the cause of the shufflings of the French ministers on the subject of the Provinces.

"I know well," said Henry a few days later, "that the people down there, and their ambassador here, are leading us on with words, as far as they can, with regard to the recompense of madam my mother for her claims upon Portugal. But they had better remember (and I think they will), that out of the offers which these sixteen deputies of the Netherlands are bringing me—and I believe it to be *carte blanche*—I shall be able to pay myself. 'Twill be better to come promptly to a good bargain and a brief conclusion, than to spin the matter out longer."²

¹ 'Lettre de la Reine Mere à Longlée,' 16 Jan. 1585. 'Brienne MS.' "Je desirerois bien que le dict seigneur roi d'Espagne s'ouvrit franchement et promptement de la recompense qu'il me venet et doit faire pour le dict Portugal, affin que les choses passassent plustot par là doucce-

ment qu'aultrement."

² Ibid. "Je ne diray jamais ce que je demande, au contraire, attendrai ses offres qu'il fault qui soient raisonnables, puis qu'il est saisy et occupateur de ce que je pretendz m'appartenir," &c.

³ 'Henry III. à Longlée,' 13 Jan.

"Don Bernardino," said the Queen-Mother on the same day, "has been keeping us up to this hour in hopes of a good offer, but 'tis to be feared, *for the good of Christendom*, that 'twill be too late. The deputies are come, bringing *carte blanche*. Nevertheless, if the King of Spain is willing to be reasonable, and that instantly, it will be well, and it would seem as if God had been pleased to place this means in our hands."

After the conferences had been fairly got under way between the French government and the envoys, the demands upon Philip for a good bargain and a handsome offer became still more pressing.

"I have given audience to the deputies from the Provinces," wrote Henry, "and the Queen-Mother has done the same. Chancellor Chiverny, Villequier, Bellièvre, and Brulart, will now confer with them from day to day. I now tell you that it will be well, *before things go any farther*, for the King of Spain to come to reason about the pretensions of madam mother. This will be a means of establishing the repose of Christendom. I shall be very willing to concur in such an arrangement, if I saw any approximation to it on the part of the King or his ministers. But I fear they will delay too long, and so you had better tell them. Push them to the point as much as possible, without letting them suspect that I have been writing about it, for that would make them rather draw back than come forward."

At the same time, during this alternate threatening and coaxing between the French and the Spanish court, and in

1585. 'Brienne MS.' "Mais il doit bien considerer—que sur les offres que me viennent faire seize principaulx deputez des pays bas (les quelz m'apportent, à ce que j'entendz la *carte blanche*), j'y auray consideration, et vauldroit beaucoup mieulx venir promptement à une bonne negotiation et brieve conclusion d'icelle, que de tenir ainsy les choses à la longue," &c.

'La Reine Mere à Longlée,' 13 Jan. 1585. Brienne MS.'

'Henry III. à Longlée,' 21 Feb. 1585. "Il seroit très à propos, avant que les choses allassent plus avant que le Roy d'Espagne regardasse à se mettre à la raison pour les pretentions de la royne madame et mere," &c.—"Les incitant le plus qu'il vous sera possible, sans toutefois qu'ils puissent cognoistre que vous en ayant escript, car cela pourroit estre plustot cause de les en faire reculer qu'autrement," &c. 'Brienne MS.'

the midst of all the solemn and tedious protocolling of the ministry and the Dutch envoys, there was a most sincere and affectionate intercourse maintained between Henry III. and the Prince of Parma. The Spanish Governor-General was assured that nothing but the warmest regard was entertained for him and his master on the part of the French court. Parma had replied, however, that so many French troops had in times past crossed the frontier to assist the rebels, that he hardly knew what to think. He expressed the hope, now that the Duke of Anjou was dead, that his Christian Majesty would not countenance the rebellion, but manifest his good-will.

"How can your Highness doubt it," said Malpierre, Henry's envoy, "for his Majesty has given proof enough of his good will, having prevented all enterprises in this regard, and preferred to have his own subjects cut into pieces rather than that they should carry out their designs. Had his Majesty been willing merely to connive at these undertakings, 'tis probable that the affairs of your highness would not have succeeded so well as they have done."¹

With regard to England, also, the conduct of Henry and his mother in these negotiations was marked by the same unfathomable duplicity. There was an appearance of cordiality on the surface; but there was deep plotting, and bargaining, and even deadly hostility lurking below. We have seen the efforts which Elizabeth's government had been making to counteract the policy which offered the sovereignty of the provinces to the French monarch. At the same time there was at least a loyal disposition upon the Queen's part to assist the Netherlands, in concurrence with Henry. The demeanour of Burghley and his colleagues was frankness itself, compared with the secret schemings of the Valois; for at least peace and good-will between the "triumvirate" of France, England and the Netherlands, was intended, as the true means of resisting the predominant influence of Spain.

Yet very soon after the solemn reception by Henry of the garter brought by Lord Derby, and in the midst of the nego-

¹ Malpierre à Henry III., 16 Fev. 1585. 'Brienne MS.'

tiations between the French court and the United Provinces, the French king was not only attempting to barter the sovereignty offered him by the Netherlands against a handsome recompense for the Portugal claim, but he was actually proposing to the King of Spain to join with him in an invasion of England! Even Philip himself must have admired and respected such a complication of villany on the part of his most Christian brother. He was, however, not disposed to put any confidence in his schemes.

"With regard to the attempt against England," wrote Philip to Mendoza, "you must keep your eyes open—you must look at the danger of letting them, before they have got rid of their rivals and reduced their heretics, go out of their own house and kingdom, and thus of being made fools of when they think of coming back again. Let them first exterminate the heretics of France, and then we will look after those of England; because 'tis more important to finish those who are near than those afar off. Perhaps the Queen-Mother proposes this invasion in order to proceed more feebly with matters in her own kingdom; and thus Mucio (Duke of Guise) and his friends will not have so safe a game, and must take heed lest they be deceived."

Thus it is obvious that Henry and Catharine intended, on the whole, to deceive the English and the Netherlands, and to get as good a bargain and as safe a friendship from Philip as could be manufactured out of the materials placed in the French King's hands by the United Provinces. Elizabeth honestly wished well to the States, but allowed Burghley and those who acted with him to flatter themselves with the

¹ Philip II. to Bernardino de Mendoza, 17 Aug. 1585. 'Archivo de Simancas' A. 56, No. 28, MS., in the 'Archives de l'Empire' at Paris. "En lo de la impresa de Inglaterra, le yd abriendo los ojos para que eche de ver el peligro en que se pone, si antes de deshazer sus emulos y reducir a los hereges o echerlos, se dexa sacar fuera de su casa y del Reyno y quan burlado se podria hallar quando

pensasse bolver. Que acaben prime los hereses de francia, y despues demos tras de Inglaterra, por que mas importa a todos acabar los de cerca que los de lejos, y quiza la Reyna madre propone la nueva impresa (de Inglaterra) por hazer afloxar con los hereges de dentro de su Reyno, y assi pues Mucio y los suyos no ternan cosa segura mientras estos estuvieren aqui, miren bien no se dexen engañar."

chimera that Henry could be induced to protect the Netherlands without assuming the sovereignty of that commonwealth. The Provinces were fighting for their existence, unconscious of their latent strength, and willing to trust to France or to England, if they could only save themselves from being swallowed by Spain. As for Spain itself, that country was more practised in duplicity even than the government of the Medici-Valois, and was of course more than a match at the game of deception for the franker politicians of England and Holland.

The King of Navarre had meanwhile been looking on at a distance. Too keen an observer, too subtle a reasoner to doubt the secret source of the movements then agitating France to its centre, he was yet unable to foresee the turn that all these intrigues were about to take. He could hardly doubt that Spain was playing a dark and desperate game with the unfortunate Henry III. ; for, as we have seen, he had himself not long before received a secret and liberal offer from Philip II., if he would agree to make war upon the King.¹ But the Béarnese was not the man to play into the hands of Spain, nor could he imagine the possibility of the Valois or even of his mother taking so suicidal a course.

After the Netherland deputies had received their final dismissal from the King, they sent Calvart, who had been secretary to their embassy, on a secret mission to Henry of Navarre, then resident at Chartres.

The envoy communicated to the Huguenot chief the meagre result of the long negotiation with the French court. Henry bade him be of good cheer, and assured him of his best wishes for their cause. He expressed the opinion that the King of France would now either attempt to overcome the Guise faction by gentle means, or at once make war upon them. The Bishop of Acqs had strongly recommended the French monarch to send the King of Navarre, with a strong force, to the assistance of the Netherlands, urging the point

¹ Herle to Queen Elizabeth, 22nd July, 1584, S. P. Office MS. Vide *ante*, p. 49.

with much fervid eloquence and solid argument. Henry for a moment had seemed impressed, but such a vigorous proceeding was of course entirely beyond his strength, and he had sunk back into his effeminate languor so soon as the bold bishop's back was turned.¹

The Béarnese had naturally conceived but little hope that such a scheme would be carried into effect; but he assured Calvart, that nothing could give him greater delight than to mount and ride in such a cause.²

"Notwithstanding," said the Béarnese, "that the villanous intentions of the Guises are becoming plainer and plainer, and that they are obviously supplied with Spanish dollars, I shall send a special envoy to the most Christian King, and, although 'tis somewhat late, implore him to throw his weight into the scale, in order to redeem your country from its misery. Meantime be of good heart, and defend as you have done your hearths, your liberty, and the honour of God."³

He advised the States unhesitatingly to continue their confidence in the French King, and to keep him informed of their plans and movements; expressing the opinion that these very intrigues of the Guise party would soon justify or even force Henry III. openly to assist the Netherlands.

So far, at that very moment, was so sharp a politician as the Béarnese from suspecting the secret schemes of Henry of Valois. Calvart urged the King of Navarre to assist the States at that moment with some slight subsidy. Antwerp was in such imminent danger as to fill the hearts of all true patriots with dismay; and a timely succour, even if a slender one, might be of inestimable value.

Henry expressed profound regret that his own means were so limited, and his own position so dangerous, as to make it difficult for him to manifest in broad daylight the full affection which he bore the Provinces.

¹ De Thou, ix. 298, *seq.*

² 'Rapport fait par le Sieur Calvart, aiant esté envoyé vers le roy de Navarre de la part des deputez des Etats Generaux chez le roy tres Chretien,'

11 Juin, 1585. (Hague Archives, MS.

³ MS. Report of Calvart, before cited.

"To my sorrow," said he, "your proposition is made in the midst of such dark and stormy weather, that those who have clearest sight are unable to see to what issue these troubles of France are tending."¹

Nevertheless, with much generosity and manliness, he promised Calvart to send two thousand soldiers, at his own charges, to the Provinces without delay; and authorised that envoy to consult with his agent at the court of the French King, in order to obtain the royal permission for the troops to cross the frontier.²

The crownless and almost houseless King had thus, at a single interview, and in exchange for nothing but good wishes, granted what the most Christian monarch of France had refused, after months of negotiation, and with sovereignty as the purchase-money. The envoy, well pleased, sped as swiftly as possible to Paris; but, as may easily be imagined, Henry of Valois forbade the movement contemplated by Henry of Navarre.

"His Majesty," said Villeroy, secretary of state, "sees no occasion, in so weighty a business, thus suddenly to change his mind; the less so, because he hopes to be able ere long to smooth over these troubles which have begun in France. Should the King either openly or secretly assist the Netherlands or allow them to be assisted, 'twould be a reason for all the Catholics now sustaining his Majesty's party to go over to the Guise faction. The Provinces must remain firm, and make no pacification with the enemy. Meantime the Queen of England is the only one to whom God has given means to afford you succour. One of these days, when the proper time comes, his Majesty will assist her in affording you relief."³

Calvart, after this conference with the King of Navarre, and subsequently with the government, entertained a lingering hope that the French King meant to assist the Provinces. "I know well who is the author of these troubles," said the

¹ MS. Report of Calvart before cited.

² Ibid.

³ It will be observed that the envoys here speak of Villeroy as mentioning the Guises by name.

unhappy monarch, who never once mentioned the name of Guise in all those conferences, "but, if God grant me life, I will give him as good as he sends, and make him rue his conduct."¹

They were not aware after how many strange vacillations Henry was one day to wreak this threatened vengeance. As for Navarre, he remained upon the watch, good humoured as ever, more merry and hopeful as the tempest grew blacker; manifesting the most frank and friendly sentiments towards the Provinces, and writing to Queen Elizabeth in the chivalrous style so dear to the heart of that sovereign, that he desired nothing better than to be her "servant and captain-general against the common enemy."

But, indeed, the French King was not so well informed as he imagined himself to be of the authorship of these troubles. Mucio, upon whose head he thus threatened vengeance, was but the instrument. The concealed hand that was directing all these odious intrigues, and lighting these flames of civil war which were so long to make France a scene of desolation, was that of the industrious letter-writer in the Escorial. That which Henry of Navarre shrewdly suspected, when he talked of the Spanish dollars in the Balafré's pocket, that which was dimly visible to the Bishop of Acqs when he told Henry III. that the "Tagus had emptied itself into the Seine and Loire, and that the gold of Mexico was flowing into the royal cabinet,"² was much more certain than they supposed.

Philip, in truth, was neglecting his own most pressing interests that he might direct all his energies towards entertaining civil war in France. That France should remain internally at peace was contrary to all his plans. He had therefore long kept Guise and his brother, the Cardinal de Lorraine, in his pay, and he had been spending large sums of money to bribe many of the most considerable functionaries in the kingdom.

¹ "Wiert oock verwittigt dat Z. M. luttel dagen voer myn vertreck, wesende onder zyne familieren seyde—je scay bien qui est l'auteur de ces

troubles, mais si Dieu me donne vie, je luy rendrai pareille et l'en ferai repentir." (MS. Report of Calvart.)

² De Thou, *ubi sup.*

The most important enterprises in the Netherlands were allowed to languish, that these subterranean operations of the "prudent" monarch of Spain should be pushed forward. The most brilliant and original genius that Philip had the good fortune to have at his disposal, the genius of Alexander Farnese, was cramped and irritated almost to madness, by the fetters imposed upon it, by the sluggish yet obstinate nature of him it was bound to obey. Farnese was at that moment engaged in a most arduous military undertaking, that famous siege of Antwerp, the details of which will be related in future chapters, yet he was never furnished with men or money enough to ensure success to a much more ordinary operation. His complaints, subdued but intense, fell almost unheeded on his master's ear. He had not "ten dollars at his command," his cavalry horses were all dead of hunger or had been eaten by their riders, who were starving to death themselves, his army had dwindled to a "handful," yet he still held on to his purpose, in spite of famine, the desperate efforts of indefatigable enemies, and all the perils and privations of a deadly winter. He, too, was kept for a long time in profound ignorance of Philip's designs.

Meantime, while the Spanish soldiers were starving in Flanders, Philip's dollars were employed by Mucio and his adherents in enlisting troops in Switzerland and Germany, in order to carry on the civil war in France. The French king was held systematically up to ridicule or detestation in every village-pulpit in his own kingdom, while the sister of Mucio, the Duchess of Montpensier, carried the scissors at her girdle, with which she threatened to provide Henry with a third crown, in addition to those of France and Poland, which he had disgraced—the coronal tonsure of a monk. The convent should be, it was intimated, the eventual fate of the modern Childeric, but meantime it was more important than ever to supersede the ultimate pretensions of Henry of Navarre. To prevent that heretic of heretics, who was not to be bought with Spanish gold, from ever reigning, was the first object of Philip and Mucio.

Accordingly, on the last day of the year 1584, a secret treaty had been signed at Joinville between Henry of Guise and his brother the Duc de Mayenne, holding the proxies of their brother the Cardinal and those of their uncles, Aumale and Elbeuf, on the one part, and John Baptist Tassis and Commander Moreo, on the other, as representatives of Philip.¹ This transaction,—sufficiently well known now to the most superficial student of history,—was a profound mystery then, so far as regarded the action of the Spanish king. It was not a secret, however, that the papistical party did not intend that the Bearnese prince should ever come to the throne, and the matter of the succession was discussed, precisely as if the throne had been vacant.

It was decided that Charles, paternal uncle to Henry of Navarre, commonly called the Cardinal Bourbon, should be considered successor to the crown, in place of Henry, whose claim was forfeited by heresy. Moreover, a great deal of superfluous money and learning was expended in ordering some elaborate legal arguments to be prepared by venal juriconsults, proving not only that the uncle ought to succeed before the nephew, but that neither the one nor the other had any claim to succeed at all. The pen having thus been employed to do the work which the sword alone could accomplish, the poor old Cardinal was now formally established by the Guise faction as presumptive heir to the crown.²

A man of straw, a superannuated court-dangler, a credulous trifier, but an earnest Papist as his brother Antony had been, sixty-six years old, and feeble beyond his years, who, his life long, had never achieved one manly action, and had now one foot in the grave; this was the puppet placed in the saddle to run a tilt against the Bearnese, the man with foot ever in the stirrup, with sword rarely in its sheath.

The contracting parties at Joinville agreed that the Cardinal should succeed on the death of the reigning king, and that no heretic should ever ascend the throne, or hold the meanest

¹ Preface, 58, 59; De Thou, ix.

272.

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² De Thou, ix. 262, seq.

office in the kingdom. They agreed further that all heretics should be "exterminated" without distinction throughout France and the Netherlands. In order to procure the necessary reforms among the clergy, the council of Trent was to be fully carried into effect. Philip pledged himself to furnish at least fifty thousand crowns monthly, for the advancement of this Holy League, as it was denominated, and as much more as should prove necessary. The sums advanced were to be repaid by the Cardinal on his succeeding to the throne. All the great officers of the crown, lords and gentlemen, cities, chapters, and universities, all Catholics, in short, in the kingdom, were deemed to be included in the league. If any foreign Catholic prince desired to enter the union, he should be admitted with the consent of both parties. Neither his Catholic majesty nor the confederated princes should treat with the most Christian King, either directly or indirectly. The compact was to remain strictly secret—one copy of it being sent to Philip, while the other was to be retained by Cardinal Bourbon and his fellow leaguers.¹

- And now—in accordance with this program—Philip proceeded stealthily and industriously to further the schemes of Mucio, to the exclusion of more urgent business. Noiseless and secret himself, and delighting in nothing so much as to glide, as it were, throughout Europe, wrapped in the mantle of invisibility, he was perpetually provoked by the noise, the bombast, and the bustle, which his less prudent confederates permitted themselves. While Philip for a long time hesitated to confide the secret of the League to Parma, whom it most imported to understand these schemes of his master, the confederates were openly boasting of the assistance which they were to derive from Parma's coöperation. Even when the
- Prince had at last been informed as to the state of affairs, he stoutly denied the facts of which the leaguers made their vaunt; thus giving to Mucio and his friends a lesson in dissimulation.²

¹ Perefine; De Thou, *ubi sup.*; Metteren, xii. 221, *seq.* Le Petit, xiv. 508, *seq.*

² 'Malpierre à Henry III.,' 27 Av. 1585. 'Brienne MS.' 'Et luy (Prince de Parme) donne à entendre que les

"Things have now arrived at a point," wrote Philip to Tassis, 15th March, 1585, "that this matter of the League cannot and ought not to be concealed from those who have a right to know it. Therefore you must speak clearly to the Prince of Parma, informing him of the whole scheme, and enjoining the utmost secrecy. You must concert with him as to the best means of rendering aid to this cause, after having apprised him of the points which regarded him, and also that of the security of Cardinal de Bourbon, in case of necessity."¹

The Prince was anything but pleased, in the midst of his anxiety and his almost superhuman labour in the Antwerp siege, to be distracted, impoverished, and weakened, in order to carry out these schemes against France; but he kept the secret manfully.

To Malpierre, the French envoy in Brussels—for there was the closest diplomatic communication between Henry III. and Philip, while each was tampering with the rebellious subjects of the other—to Malpierre Parma flatly contradicted all complicity on the part of the Spanish King or himself with the Holy League, of which he knew Philip to be the originator and the chief.

"If I complain to the Prince of Parma," said the envoy, "of the companies going from Flanders to assist the League, he will make me no other reply than that which the President has done—that there is nothing at all in it—until they are fairly arrived in France. The President (Richardot) said that if the Catholic King belonged to the League, as they insinuate, his Majesty would declare the fact openly."²

And a few days later, the Prince himself averred; as Malpierre had anticipated, that "as to any intention on the part of himself or his Catholic Majesty, to send succour to the League, according to the boast of these gentlemen, he had never thought of such a thing, nor had received any order on

seigneurs de la dicte ligue se faisoient fortz d'avoir secours de deçà—à quoi il m'a respondu que jamais le d' Seign. Roy Catholique ne le feroit, et s'ils en faisoient courir le bruit, ce estoit pour donner plus d'appuy à leurs

affaires," &c.

¹ 'Philip II. to J. B. Tassis,' 15 March, 1585. 'Archivo de Simancas,' MS.

² 'Malpierre à De Croasne,' 27 Av. 1585, 'Brienne MS.'

the subject from his master. If the King intended to do anything of the kind, he would do it openly. He protested that he had never seen anything, or known anything of the League.”¹

Here was a man who knew how to keep a secret, and who had no scruples in the matter of dissimulation, however enraged he might be at seeing men and money diverted from his own masterly combinations in order to carry out these schemes of his master.

Mucio, on the contrary, was imprudent and inclined to boast. His contempt for Henry III. made him blind to the dangers to be apprehended from Henry of Navarre. He did little, but talked a great deal.

Philip was very anxious that the work should be done both secretly and thoroughly. “Let the business be finished before Saint John’s day,” said he to Tassis, when sending fifty thousand dollars for the use of the brothers Guise. “Tell Iniquez to warn them not to be sluggish. Let them not begin in a lukewarm manner, but promise them plenty of assistance from me, if they conduct themselves properly. Let them beware of wavering, or of falling into plans of conciliation. If they do their duty, I will do mine.”²

But the Guise faction moved slowly despite of Philip’s secret promptings. The truth is, that the means proposed by the Spanish monarch were ludicrously inadequate to his plans, and it was idle to suppose that the world was to be turned upside down for his benefit, at the very low price which he was prepared to pay.

Nothing less than to exterminate all the heretics in Christendom, to place himself on the thrones of France and of England, and to extinguish the last spark of rebellion in the Netherlands, was his secret thought, and yet it was very difficult to get fifty thousand dollars from him from month to month. Procrastinating and indolent himself, he was for ever rebuking the torpid movements of the Guises.

“Let Mucio set his game well at the outset,” said he; “let

¹ ‘Malpierre à Henry III.,’ 28 Mai, 1585. ‘Brienne MS.’

² ‘Philip II. to Tassis,’ MS. before cited.

him lay the axe to the root of the tree, for to be wasting time fruitlessly is sharpening the knife for himself." ¹

This was almost prophetic. When after so much talking and tampering, there began to be recrimination among the leaguers, Philip was very angry with his subordinate.

"Here is Mucio," said he, "trying to throw the blame of all the difficulties, which have arisen, upon us. Not hastening, not keeping his secret, letting the execution of the enterprise grow cold, and lending an ear to suggestions about peace, without being sure of its conclusion, he has turned his followers into cowards, discredited his cause, and given the King of France opportunity to strengthen his force and improve his party. These are all very palpable things. I am willing to continue my friendship for them, but not, if, while they accept it, they permit themselves to complain, instead of manifesting gratitude." ²

On the whole, however, the affairs of the League seemed prosperous. There was doubtless too much display among the confederates, but there was a growing uneasiness among the royalists. Cardinal Bourbon, discarding his ecclesiastical robes and scarlet stockings, paraded himself daily in public, clothed in military costume, with all the airs of royalty. Many persons thought him mad. On the other hand, Epergnon, the haughty minion-in-chief, who governed Henry III. and insulted all the world, was becoming almost polite.

"The progress of the League," said Busbecq, "is teaching the Duc d' Epergnon manners. 'Tis a youth of such insolence, that without uncovering he would talk with men of

¹ "Lo que sobre todo conviene acordar y encargar a Mucio es que procure poner bien su juego á los principios, con acudir á la raiz porque lo contrario y dejarse consumir del tiempo de balde, podra ser su cuchillo." (Ibid.)

² "Mucio nos quiere hazer aca cargo de todas las dificultades en que alla se han metido, al principio par apresurarse y no guardar bien su secreto, y despues por haver se resfriado la execucion de la empressa, y dado oydos

a la paz, que tras no les poder ser segura la conclusion della, solo el trato ha acobardado los animos de los que le siguieran, desacreditando su causa y dando lugar a que el Rey de Francia pudiesse recoger sus fuerzas y mejorar su partido, que son todas tan palpables—mas no les acceptando que estan quexosos en lugar de obligados." Philip II. to Mendoza, 9 July, 1585. 'Archivo de Simancas MS.' In the 'Archives de l'Empire at Paris.' A. 56. 30.

royal descent, while they were barcheaded. 'Tis a common jest now that he has found out where his hat is." ¹

Thus, for a long time, a network of secret political combinations had been stretching itself over Christendom. There were great movements of troops throughout Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands, slowly concentrating themselves upon France; yet, on the whole, the great mass of the populations, the men and women who were to pay, to fight, to starve, to be trampled upon, to be outraged, to be plundered, to be burned out of houses and home, to bleed, and to die, were merely ignorant, gaping spectators. That there was something very grave in prospect was obvious, but exactly what was impending they knew no more than the generation yet unborn. Very noiselessly had the patient manager who sat in the Escorial been making preparations for that European tragedy in which most of the actors had such fatal parts assigned them, and of which few of the spectators of its opening scenes were doomed to witness the conclusion. A shifting and glancing of lights, a vision of vanishing feet, a trampling and bustling of unseen crowds, movements of concealed machinery, a few incoherent words, much noise and confusion vague and incomprehensible, till at last the tinkling of a small bell, and a glimpse of the modest manager stealing away as the curtain was rising—such was the spectacle presented at Midsummer 1585.

And in truth the opening picture was effective. Sixteen black-robed, long-bearded Netherland envoys stalking away, discomfited and indignant upon one side; Catharine de' Medici on the other, regarding them with a sneer, painfully contorted into a pathetic smile; Henry the King, robed in a sack of penitence, trembling and hesitating, leaning on the arm of Epergnon, but quailing even under the protection of that mighty swordsman; Mucio, careering, truncheon in hand, in full panoply, upon his war-horse, waving forward a mingled mass of German lanzknechts, Swiss musketeers, and Lorraine pikemen; the redoubtable Don Bernardino de Mendoza, in

¹ Busbecqui. 'Epist. ad Rud.' 25 April, 1585, p. 154.

front, frowning and ferocious, with his drawn sword in his hand ; Elizabeth of England, in the back ground, with the white-bearded Burghley and the monastic Walsingham, all surveying the scene with eyes of deepest meaning ; and, somewhat aside, but in full view, silent, calm, and imperturbably good-humoured, the bold Béarnese, standing with a mischievous but prophetic smile glittering through his blue eyes and curly beard—thus grouped were the personages of the drama in the introductory scenes.

The course of public events which succeeded the departure of the Netherland deputies is sufficiently well known. The secret negotiations and intrigues, however, by which those external facts were preceded or accompanied rest mainly in dusty archives, and it was therefore necessary to dwell somewhat at length upon them in the preceding pages.

The treaty of Joinville was signed on the last day of the year 1584.

We have seen the real nature of the interview of Ambassador Mendoza with Henry III. and his mother, which took place early in January, 1585. Immediately after that conference, Don Bernardino betook himself to the Duke of Guise, and lost no time in stimulating his confederate to prompt but secret action.

The Netherland envoys had their last audience on the 18th March, and their departure and disappointment was the signal for the general exhibition and explosion. The great civil war began, and the man who refused to annex the Netherlands to the French kingdom soon ceased to be regarded as a king.

On the 31st March, the heir presumptive, just manufactured by the Guises, sent forth his manifesto. Cardinal Bourbon, by this document, declared that for twenty-four years past no proper measures had been taken to extirpate the heresy by which France was infested. There was no natural heir to the King. Those who claimed to succeed at his death had deprived themselves, by heresy, of their rights. Should they gain their ends, the ancient religion would be

abolished throughout the kingdom, as it had been in England, and Catholics be subjected to the same frightful tortures which they were experiencing there. New men, admitted to the confidence of the crown, clothed with the highest honours, and laden with enormous emoluments, had excluded the ancient and honoured functionaries of the state, who had been obliged to sell out their offices to these upstart successors. These new favourites had seized the finances of the kingdom, all of which were now collected into the private coffers of the King, and shared by him with his courtiers. The people were groaning under new taxes invented every day, yet they knew nothing of the distribution of the public treasure, while the King himself was so impoverished as to be unable to discharge his daily debts. Meantime these new advisers of the crown had renewed to the Protestants of the kingdom the religious privileges of which they had so justly been deprived, yet the religious peace which had followed had not brought with it the promised diminution of the popular burthens. Never had the nation been so heavily taxed or reduced to such profound misery. For these reasons, he, Cardinal Bourbon, with other princes of the blood, peers, gentlemen, cities, and universities, had solemnly bound themselves by oath to extirpate heresy down to the last root, and to save the people from the dreadful load under which they were languishing. It was for this that they had taken up arms, and till that purpose was accomplished they would never lay them down.

The paper concluded with the hope that his Majesty would not take these warlike demonstrations amiss ; and a copy of the document was placed in the royal hands.¹

It was very obvious to the most superficial observer, that the manifesto was directed almost as much against the reigning sovereign as against Henry of Navarre. The adherents of the Guise faction, and especially certain theologians in their employ, had taken very bold grounds upon the relations between king and subjects, and had made the public very

¹ De Thou, ix, 284, *seq.*

familiar with their doctrines. It was a duty, they said, "to depose a prince who did not discharge his duty. Authority ill regulated was robbery, and it was as absurd to call him a king who knew not how to govern, as it was to take a blind man for a guide, or to believe that a statue could influence the movements of living men."¹

Yet to the faction, inspired by such rebellious sentiments, and which was thundering in his face such tremendous denunciations, the unhappy Henry could not find a single royal or manly word of reply. He threw himself on his knees, when, if ever, he should have assumed an attitude of command. He answered the insolence of the men, who were parading their contempt for his authority, by humble excuses and supplications for pardon. He threw his crown in the dust before their feet, as if such humility would induce them to place it again upon his head. He abandoned the minions who had been his pride, his joy, and his defence, and deprecated, with an abject whimper, all responsibility for the unmeasured ambition and the insatiable rapacity of a few private individuals. He conjured the party-leaders, who had hurled defiance in his face, to lay down their arms, and promised that they should find in his wisdom and bounty more than all the advantages which they were seeking to obtain by war.²

Henry of Navarre answered in a different strain. The gauntlet had at last been thrown down to him, and he came forward to take it up ; not insolently nor carelessly, but with the cold courtesy of a Christian knight and valiant gentleman. He denied the charge of heresy. He avowed detestation of all doctrines contrary to the Word of God, to the decrees of the Fathers of the Church, or condemned by the Councils. The errors and abuses which had from time to time crept into the church, had long demanded, in the opinion of all pious persons, some measures of reform. After many bloody wars, no better remedy had been discovered to arrest the cause of these dire religious troubles, whether in France or Germany, than to permit all men to obey the dictates of their own con-

¹ Perefixe, 58.

² De Thou, ix. 288.

science. The Protestants had thus obtained in France many edicts by which the peace of the kingdom had been secured. He could not himself be denounced as a heretic, for he had always held himself ready to receive instruction, and to be set right where he had erred. To call him "relapsed" was an outrage. Were it true, he were indeed unworthy of the crown, but the world knew that his change at the Massacre of St. Bartholomew had been made under duress, and that he had returned to the reformed faith when he had recovered his liberty. Religious toleration had been the object of his life. In what the tyranny of the popes and the violence of the Spaniards had left him of his kingdom of Navarre, Catholics and Protestants enjoyed a perfect religious liberty. No man had the right, therefore, to denounce him as an enemy of the church, or a disturber of the public repose, for he had ever been willing to accept all propositions of peace which left the rights of conscience protected.

He was a Frenchman, a prince of France, a living member of the kingdom, feeling with its pains, and bleeding with its wounds. They who denounced him were alien to France, factitious portions of her body, feeling no suffering, even should she be consuming with living fire. The Leaguers were the friends and the servants of the Spaniards, while he had been born the enemy, and with too good reason, of the whole Spanish race.

"Let the name of Papist and of Huguenot," he said, "be heard no more among us. Those terms were buried in the edict of peace. Let us speak only of Frenchmen and of Spaniards. It is the counter-league which we must all unite to form, the natural union of the head with all its members."

Finally, to save the shedding of so much innocent blood, to spare all the countless miseries of civil war, he implored the royal permission to terminate this quarrel in person, by single combat with the Duke of Guise, one to one, two to two, or in as large a number as might be desired, and upon any spot within or without the kingdom that should be assigned. "The Duke of Guise," said Henry of Navarre,

"cannot but accept my challenge as an honour, coming as it does from a prince infinitely his superior in rank ; and thus, may God defend the right."

This paper, drawn up by the illustrious Duplessis-Mornay, who was to have been the second of the King of Navarre in the proposed duel, was signed 10 June 1585.¹

The unfortunate Henry III., not so dull as to doubt that the true object of the Guise party was to reduce him to insignificance, and to open their own way to the throne, was too impotent of purpose to follow the dictates which his wisest counsellors urged and his own reason approved. His choice had lain between open hostility with his Spanish enemy and a more terrible combat with that implacable foe wearing the mask of friendship. He had refused to annex to his crown the rich and powerful Netherlands, from dread of a foreign war ; and he was now about to accept for himself and kingdom all the horrors of a civil contest, in which his avowed antagonist was the first captain of the age, and his nominal allies the stipendiaries of Philip II.

Villeroy, his prime minister, and Catharine de' Medici, his mother, had both devoted him to disgrace and ruin. The deputies from the Netherlands had been dismissed, and now, notwithstanding the festivities and exuberant demonstrations of friendship with which the Earl of Derby's splendid embassy had been greeted, it became necessary to bind Henry hand and foot to the conspirators, who had sworn the destruction of that Queen, as well as his own, and the extirpation of heresy and heretics in every realm of Christendom.

On the 9th June the league demanded a royal decree, forbidding the practice of all religion but the Roman Catholic, on pain of death. In vain had the clear-sighted Bishop of Aqs uttered his eloquent warnings. Despite such timely counsels, which he was capable at once of appreciating and of neglecting, Henry followed slavishly the advice of those whom

¹ Declaration du Roy de Navarre contre les calomnies de la Ligue. In Duplessis-Mornay, 'Mémoires et Cor-

respondance,' ed. 1824, vol. iii. 94 seq. De Thou, ix. 320, seq.

he knew in his heart to be his foes, and authorised the great conspiracy against Elizabeth, against Protestantism, and against himself.

On the 5th June Villeroy had expressed a wish for a very secret interview with Mendoza, on the subject of the invasion of England.

"It needed not this overture," said that magniloquent Spaniard, "to engender in a person of my talents, and with the heart of a Mendoza, venom enough for vengeance. I could not more desire than I did already to assist in so holy a work; nor could I aspire to greater honour than would be gained in uniting those crowns (of France and Spain) in strict friendship, for the purpose of extirpating heresy throughout Europe, and of chastising the Queen of England—whose abominations I am never likely to forget, having had them so long before my eyes—and of satisfying my just resentment for the injuries she has inflicted on myself. It was on this subject," continued the ambassador, "that Monsieur de Villeroy wished a secret interview with me, pledging himself—if your Majesty would deign to unite yourself with this King, and to aid him with your forces—to a successful result."¹

Mendoza accordingly expressed a willingness to meet the ingenuous Secretary of State—who had so recently been assisting at the banquets and rejoicings with Lord Derby and his companions, which had so much enlivened the French capital—and assured him that his most Catholic Majesty would be only too glad to draw closer the bonds of friendship

¹ "La abertura que estos reyes me havian hecho . . . no havia de engendrar en una persona de mis prendas y coraçon de un Mendoza veneno para procurar venganças, y no antes desseo de ayudar obra tan santa, pues que me podria redundar mayor honra que de otra ninguna, siendo instrumento para unir estas coronas con firme amistad, debaxo de lo qual pudiesse extirpar las heregias de Europa, dando privilegio a esto, con castigar a la reyna de Ingaltierra, cuyas abominaciones creya que yo no tendria olvida-

das, como persona que las havia tenido tantos años adelante los ojos, y causa de justo resentimiento por lo que havia hecho a la propria mia. Sobre esta materia dessara el Señor Villeroy vene secretamente conmigo, y entender suyo, me asegurara, si V. M^{da}. holgaria de ayudar con sus fuerças y juntarse con este rey, para el efeto." Don Bern^{do} de Mendoza a Su Ca^{ma} R. Mag^d. (de çifrada), Paris, 7 June, 1585. Arch. de Simancae, in the 'Archives de l'Empire' at Paris, B. 56. 220. 223, MS.

with the most Christian King, for the service of God and the glory of his Church.

The next day the envoy and the Secretary of State met, very secretly, in the house of the Signor Gondi. Villeroy commenced his harangue by an allusion to the current opinion, that Mendoza had arrived in France with a torch in his hand, to light the fires of civil war in that kingdom, as he had recently done in England.¹

"I do not believe," replied Mendoza, "that discreet and prudent persons in France attribute my actions to any such motives. As for the ignorant people of the kingdom, they do not appal me, although they evidently imagine that I have imbibed, during my residence in England, something of the spirit of the enchanter Merlin, that, by signs and cabalistic words alone, I am thought capable of producing such commotions."²

After this preliminary flourish the envoy proceeded to complain bitterly of the most Christian King and his mother, who, after the propositions which they had made him, when on his way to Spain, had, since his return, become so very cold and dry towards him.³ And on this theme he enlarged for some time.

Villeroy replied, by complaining, in his turn, about the dealings of the most Catholic King, with the leaguers and the rebels of France; and Mendoza rejoined by an intimation that harping upon past grievances and suspicions was hardly the way to bring about harmony in present matters.

Struck with the justice of this remark, the French Secretary of State entered at once upon business. He made a very long speech⁴ upon the tyranny which "that Englishwoman"

¹ "Con el acha en la mano para emprender fuego de guerra civil, como havia hecho an Ingaltierra." MS. just cited, 7 June, 1585.

² "Y que los ignorantes de francia no me espantarian, imaginandose haverse me pegado del tiempo que estuve en Ingaltierra algo del spiritu de Merlin, para haçer, con signos y

palabras, semejantes commociones." (Ibid.)

³ "Havellos hallado tan frios y secos." (Ibid.)

⁴ "Respondio me que era bien proponiendo me con grande arenga, la tirannia con que procedia contra los catolicos agora de nuevo la de Ingaltierra, offensas que havia hecho a V.

was anew inflicting upon the Catholics in her kingdom, upon the offences which she had committed against the King of Spain, and against the King of France and his brothers, and upon the aliment which she had been yielding to the civil war in the Netherlands and in France for so many years. He then said that if Mendoza would declare with sincerity, and "without any of the duplicity of a minister"—that Philip would league himself with Henry for the purpose of invading England, in order to reduce the three kingdoms to the Catholic faith, and to place their crowns on the head of the Queen of Scotland, to whom they of right belonged; then that the King, his master, was most ready to join in so holy an enterprise. He begged Mendoza to say with what number of troops the invasion could be made; whether Philip could send any from Flanders or from Spain; how many it would be well to send from France, and under what chieftain; in what manner it would be best to communicate with his most Catholic Majesty; whether it were desirable to despatch a secret envoy to him, and of what quality such agent ought to be. He also observed that the most Christian King could not himself speak to Mendoza on the subject before having communicated the matter to the Queen-Mother, but expressed a wish that a special carrier might be forthwith despatched to Spain; for he might be sure that, on an affair of such weight, he would not have permitted himself to reveal the secret wishes of his master, except by his commands.¹

Mendoza replied, by enlarging with much enthusiasm on the facility with which England could be conquered by the combined power of France and Spain. If it were not a very difficult matter before—even with the jealousy between the

M^d, y el mismo a este rey y hermanos, alimentando la guerra en los payeses baxos, y en francia, por largos años, que le dixesse, con llaneza y sin doblez de ministro, si V. M^d. holgaria de juntarse y ligarse con este rey, para hazer aquella impresa, reduziendo los tres reynos a la fee Cat^{ca}. Rom^{na}, y poniendo la corona a la de la reyna de Escocia, que era a la que de derecho

le tocava, y lo que el rey su amo solo pretendia, que quedasse a quel reyno en la neutralidad, que quedasse a quel reyno en la neutralidad, que hasta aqui, que por ser empresa tan santa, se prometia que V. M^d. no refusaria el asistir con sus fuerzas a ella, que de animo de su amo me asegurava de estar aparejedi-simo para ello.' (MS, just cited, 7 June 1585.)

¹ Ibid.

two crowns—how much less so, now that they could join their fleets and armies ; now that the arming by the one prince would not inspire the other with suspicion ; now that they would be certain of finding safe harbour in each other's kingdoms, in case of unfavourable weather and head-winds, and that they could arrange from what ports to sail, in what direction, and under what commanders. He disapproved, however, of sending a special messenger to Spain, on the ground of wishing to keep the matter entirely secret, but in reality—as he informed Philip—because he chose to keep the management in his own hands ; because he could always let slip Mucio upon them, in case they should play him false ; because he feared that the leaking out of the secret might discourage the Leaguers, and because he felt that the bolder and more lively were the Cardinal of Bourbon and his confederates, the stronger was the party of the King, his master, and the more intimidated and dispirited would be the mind and the forces of the most Christian King. “And this is precisely the point,” said the diplomatist, “at which a minister of your Majesty should aim at this season.”¹

Thus the civil war in France—an indispensable part of Philip's policy—was to be maintained at all hazards ; and although the ambassador was of opinion that the most Christian King was sincere in his proposition to invade England, it would never do to allow any interval of tranquillity to the wretched subjects of that Christian King.

“I cannot doubt,” said Mendoza, “that the making of this proposal to me with so much warmth was the especial persuasion of God, who, hearing the groans of the Catholics of England, so cruelly afflicted, wished to force the French King and his minister to feel, in the necessity which surrounds them, that the offending Him, by impeding the grandeur of your Majesty, would be their total ruin, and that their only salvation is to unite in sincerity and truth with your Majesty for the destruction of the heretics.”²

¹ “Que es, en lo que en esta sazón | ta la mira.” (MS. just cited, 7 June,
el ministro de V. M^{da}. ha de traer pues- | 1585.)

² Ibid.

Therefore, although—judging from the nature of the French—he might imagine that they were attempting to put him to sleep, Mendoza, on the whole, expressed a conviction that the King was in earnest, having arrived at the conclusion that he could only get rid of the Guise faction by sending them over to England. “Seeing that he cannot possibly eradicate the war from his kingdom,” said the envoy, “because of the boldness with which the Leaguers maintain it, with the strong assistance of your Majesty, he has determined to embrace with much fervour, and without any deception at all, the enterprise against England, as the only remedy to quiet his own dominions. The subjugation of those three kingdoms, in order to restore them to their rightful owner, is a purpose so holy, just, and worthy of your Majesty, and one which you have had so constantly in view, that it is superfluous for me to enlarge upon the subject. Your Majesty knows that its effects will be the tranquillity and preservation of all your realms. The reasons for making the attempt, even without the aid of France, become demonstrations now that she is unanimously in favour of the scheme. The most Christian King is resolutely bent—so far as I can comprehend the intrigues of Villeroy—to carry out this project on the foundation of a treaty with the Guise party. It will not take much time, therefore, to put down the heretics here; nor will it consume much more to conquer England with the armies of two such powerful Princes.¹ The power of that island is of little moment, there being no disciplined forces to oppose us, even if they were all unanimous in its defence; how much less then, with so many Catholics to assist the invaders, seeing them so powerful. If your Majesty, on account of your Netherlands, is not afraid of putting arms into the hands of the Guise family in France, there need be less objection to

¹ “Los de Guisa, teniendo las armas en la mano, combaten a los hereges de aqui, que no puede ser mucho tiempo, y assi mismo, el que se consumira en reducir a Inglaterra con fuerças de tan poderosissimos principes, y la de la isla no de momento, pare podellos

contrastor gente no exercitada, si bien estuviessen todos unanimos para defendarse, quanto mas, haviendo tantas Cat^{cos} que han de acudir á los estrangeros, viendo los tan poderosos.” (MS. just cited, 7 June, 1585.)

sending one of that house into England, particularly as you will send forces of your own into that kingdom, by the reduction of which the affairs of Flanders will be secured. "To effect the pacification of the Netherlands the sooner, it would be desirable to conquer England as early as October."¹

Having thus sufficiently enlarged upon the sincerity of the French King and his prime minister, in their dark projects against a friendly power, and upon the ease with which that friendly power could be subjected, the ambassador begged for a reply from his royal master without delay. He would be careful, meantime, to keep the civil war alive in France—thus verifying the poetical portrait of himself, the truth of which he had just been so indignantly and rhetorically denying—but it was desirable that the French should believe that this civil war was not Philip's sole object. He concluded by drawing his master's attention to the sufferings of the English Catholics. "I cannot refrain," he said, "from placing before your eyes the terrible persecutions which the Catholics are suffering in England; the blood of the martyrs flowing in so many kinds of torments; the groans of the prisoners, of the widows and orphans; the general oppression and servitude, which is the greatest ever endured by a people of God, under any tyrant whatever. Your Majesty, into whose hands God is now pleased to place the means, so long desired, of extirpating and totally destroying the heresies of our time, can alone liberate them from their bondage."²

The picture of these kings, prime ministers, and ambassadors, thus plotting treason, stratagem, and massacre, is a dark and dreary one. The description of English sufferings for conscience' sake, under the Protestant Elizabeth, is even

¹ MS. just cited, 7 June, 1585.

² "Ante cuyos ojos no puedo dexar de anteponer en esta la terrible persecucion que pasan los Cat^{os} en Inglaterra", con mucha sangre de martires derremada con diversos generos de tormentos, los gemidos de los prisioneros, de los viudas y huerfanos, y opresion general y servidumbre que es la mayor que ha parescido jamas

pueblo de Dios, debaxo de ningun tirano, de euya mano espera solo ser libertados por las de V. M^d. a quien Dios es servido de poner en las proprias la ocasion que tantos dias ha procurado para la extirpacion y total destruycion de les heregias de n^{ro} tiempo, el sea servido de remediallos." (Ibid.)

more painful ; for it had unfortunately too much of truth, although as wilfully darkened and exaggerated as could be done by religious hatred and Spanish bombast. The Queen was surrounded by legions of deadly enemies. Spain, the Pope, the League, were united in one perpetual conspiracy against her ; and they relied on the coöperation of those subjects of hers whom her own cruelty was converting into traitors.

We read with a shudder these gloomy secrets of conspiracy and wholesale murder, which make up the diplomatic history of the sixteenth century, and we cease to wonder that a woman, feeling herself so continually the mark at which all the tyrants and assassins of Europe were aiming—although not possessing perhaps the evidences of her peril so completely as they have been revealed to us—should come to consider every English Papist as a traitor and an assassin. It was unfortunate that she was not able to rise beyond the vile instincts of the age, and by a magnanimous and sublime toleration, to convert her secret enemies into loyal subjects.

And now Henry of Valois was to choose between league and counter-league, between Henry of Guise and Henry of Navarre, between France and Spain. The whole chivalry of Gascony and Guienne, the vast swarm of industrious and hardy Huguenot artisans, the Netherland rebels, the great English Queen, stood ready to support the cause of French nationality, and of all nationalities, against a threatening world-empire, of religious liberty against sacerdotal absolutism, and the crown of a King, whose only merit had hitherto been to acquiesce in a religious toleration dictated to him by others, against those who derided his authority and insulted his person. The bold knight-errant of Christendom, the champion to the utterance against Spain, stood there with lance in rest, and the King scarcely hesitated.

The League, gliding so long unheeded, now reared its crest in the very palace of France, and full in the monarch's face. With a single shudder the victim fell into its coils.

The choice was made. On the 18th of July the edict of

Nemours was published, revoking all previous edicts by which religious peace had been secured. Death and confiscation of property were now proclaimed as the penalty of practising any religious rites save those of the Roman Catholic Church. Six months were allowed to the Nonconformists to put their affairs in order, after which they were to make public profession of the Catholic religion, with regular attendance upon its ceremonies, or else go into perpetual exile. To remain in France without abjuring heresy was thenceforth a mortal crime, to be expiated upon the gallows. As a matter of course, all Huguenots were instantaneously incapacitated from public office, the mixed chambers of justice were abolished, and the cautionary towns were to be restored. On the other hand, the Guise faction were to receive certain cities into their possession, as pledges that this sanguinary edict should be fulfilled.¹

Thus did Henry III. abjectly kiss the hand which smote him. His mother, having since the death of Anjou no further interest in affecting to favour the Huguenots, had 15th July, arranged the basis of this treaty with the Spanish 1585. party. And now the unfortunate King had gone solemnly down to the Parliament of Paris, to be present at the registration of the edict. The counsellors and presidents were all assembled, and as they sat there in their crimson robes, they seemed, to the excited imagination of those who loved their country, like embodiments of the impending and most sanguinary tragedy. As the monarch left the parliament-house a faint cry of 'God save the King' was heard in the street. Henry hung his head, for it was long since that cry had met his ears, and he knew that it was a false and languid demonstration which had been paid for by the Leaguers.

And thus was the compact signed—an unequal compact. Madam League was on horseback, armed in proof, said a contemporary; the King was on foot, and dressed in a shirt of penitence.² The alliance was not an auspicious one. Not

¹ De Thou, ix. 328, *seq.*

² 'L'Estoile,' 186.

peace, but a firebrand—*facem, non pacem*—had the King held forth to his subjects.¹

When the news came to Henry of Navarre that the King had really promulgated this fatal edict, he remained for a time, with amazement and sorrow, leaning heavily upon a table, with his face in his right hand. When he raised his head again—so he afterwards asserted—one side of his moustachio had turned white.²

Meantime Gregory XIII., who had always refused to sanction the League, was dead, and Cardinal Peretti, under the 24th April, name of Sixtus V., now reigned in his place. Born 1585. of an illustrious house, as he said—for it was a house without a roof³—this monk of humble origin was of inordinate ambition. Feigning a humility which was but the cloak to his pride, he was in reality as grasping, self-seeking, and revengeful, as he seemed gentle and devout. It was inevitable that a pontiff of this character should seize the opportunity offered him to mimic Hildebrand, and to brandish on high the thunderbolts of the Church.

With a flaming prelude concerning the omnipotence delegated by Almighty God to St. Peter and his successors—an authority infinitely superior to all earthly powers—the decrees of which were irresistible alike by the highest and the meanest, and which hurled misguided princes from their thrones into the abyss, like children of Beelzebub, the Pope proceeded to fulminate his sentence of excommunication against those children of wrath, Henry of Navarre and Henry of Condé. They were denounced as heretics, relapsed, and enemies of 28th Aug., God. The King was declared dispossessed of his 1585. principality of Bearne, and of what remained to him of Navarre. He was stripped of all dignities, privileges, and property, and especially proclaimed incapable of ever ascending the throne of France.⁴

The Bearnese replied by a clever political squib. A terse

¹ "Gulstadis factum dum puto dicere pacem, Pacem non possum dicere, dico facem."
L'Estoile, 187.

² Mathieu, anno 1585.

³ De Thou, ix. 368, seq.

⁴ De Thou, ix. 369. 'L'Estoile,' 190.

and spirited paper found its way to Rome, and was soon affixed to the statutes of Pasquin and Marforio, and in other public places of that city, and even to the gates of the papal palace. Without going beyond his own doors, his Holiness had the opportunity of reading, to his profound amazement, that Mr. Sixtus, calling himself Pope, had foully and maliciously lied in calling the King of Navarre a heretic. This Henry offered to prove before any free council legitimately chosen. If the Pope refused to submit to such decision, he was himself no better than excommunicate and Antichrist, and the King of Navarre thereby declared mortal and perpetual war upon him. The ancient kings of France had known how to chastise the insolence of former popes, and he hoped, when he ascended the throne, to take vengeance on Mr. Sixtus for the insult thus offered to all the kings of Christendom—and so on, in a vein which showed the Bear-nese to be a man rather amused than blasted by these papal fireworks.¹

Sixtus V., though imperious, was far from being dull. He knew how to appreciate a man when he found one, and he rather admired the cheerful attitude maintained by Navarre, as he tossed back the thunderbolts. He often spoke afterwards of Henry with genuine admiration, and declared that in all the world he knew but two persons fit to wear a crown—Henry of Navarre and Elizabeth of England. "Twas pity," he said, "that both should be heretics."²

And thus the fires of civil war had been lighted throughout Christendom, and the monarch of France had thrown himself head foremost into the flames.

¹ De Thou, ix. 376-378. Prefixe, 62, 63. 'L'Etoile,' 190. The last-named writer declares himself the author of this famous answer to the bull of Sixtus:

"Au susdit écrit, fait par l'auteur des présents memoires, on a fait faire

du palais de Paris un voyage à Rome, ou l'on l'a mis, signifié, et affiché, et l'a t on inseré aux recueils de ce tems, imprimés à la Rochelle, tant la vanité et curiosité de ce tems estoit grande."

² De Thou, Prefixe, *ubi sup.*

CHAPTER V.

Position and Character of Farnese — Preparations for Antwerp Siege — Its Characteristics — Foresight of William the Silent — Sainte Aldegonde, the Burgomaster — Anarchy in Antwerp — Character of Sainte Aldegonde — Admiral Trealong — Justinus de Nassau — Hohenlo — Opposition to the Plan of Orange — Liefkenahoeck — Head-Quarters of Parma at Kalloo — Difficulty of supplying the City — Results of not piercing the Dykes — Preliminaries of the Siege — Successes of the Spaniards — Energy of Farnese with Sword and Pen — His Correspondence with the Antwerpens — Progress of the Bridge — Impoverished Condition of Parma — Patriots attempt Bois-le-Duc — Their Misconduct — Failure of the Enterprise — The Scheldt Bridge completed — Description of the Structure — Position of Alexander and his Army — La Motte attempts in vain Ostend — Patriots gain Liefkenahoeck — Projects of Gianibelli — Alarm on the Bridge — The Fire Ships — The Explosion — Its Results — Death of the Viscount of Ghent — Perpetual Anxiety of Farnese — Impoverished State of the Spaniards — Intended Attack of the Kowenstyn — Second Attack of the Kowenstyn — A Landing effected — A sharp Combat — The Dyke pierced — Rally of the Spaniards — Parma comes to the Rescue — Fierce Struggle on the Dyke — The Spaniards successful — Premature Triumph at Antwerp — Defeat of the Patriots — The Ship War's End — Despair of the Citizens — Sainte Aldegonde discouraged — His Critical Position — His Negotiations with the Enemy — Correspondence with Richardot — Commotion in the City — Interview of Marnix with Parma — Suspicious Conduct of Marnix — Deputation to the Prince — Oration of Marnix — Private Views of Parma — Capitulation of Antwerp — Mistakes of Marnix — Philip on the Religious Question — Triumphal Entrance of Alexander — Rebuilding of the Citadel — Gratification of Philip — Note on Sainte Aldegonde.

THE negotiations between France and the Netherlands have been massed, in order to present a connected and distinct view of the relative attitude of the different countries of Europe. The conferences and diplomatic protocolling had resulted in nothing positive; but it is very necessary for the reader to understand the negative effects of all this dissimulation and palace-politics upon the destiny of the new commonwealth, and upon Christendom at large. The League had now achieved a great triumph; the King of France had virtually abdicated, and it was now requisite for the King of Navarre, the Netherlands, and Queen Elizabeth, to draw

more closely together than before, if the last hope of forming a counter-league were not to be abandoned. The next step in political combination was therefore a solemn embassy of the States-General to England. Before detailing those negotiations, however, it is proper to direct attention to the external public events which had been unrolling themselves in the Provinces, contemporaneously with the secret history which has been detailed in the preceding chapters.

By presenting in their natural groupings various distinct occurrences, rather than by detailing them in strict chronological order, a clearer view of the whole picture will be furnished than could be done by intermingling personages, transactions, and scenery, according to the arbitrary command of Time alone.

The Netherlands, by the death of Orange, had been left without a head. On the other hand, the Spanish party had never been so fortunate in their chief at any period since the destiny of the two nations had been blended with each other. Alexander Farnese, Prince of Parma, was a general and a politician, whose character had been steadily ripening since he came into the command of the country. He was now thirty-seven years of age—with the experience of a sexagenarian. No longer the impetuous, arbitrary, hot-headed youth, whose intelligence and courage hardly atoned for his insolent manner and stormy career, he had become pensive, modest, almost gentle. His genius was rapid in conception, patient in combination, fertile in expedients, adamant in the endurance of suffering; for never did a heroic general and a noble army of veterans manifest more military virtue in the support of an infamous cause than did Parma and his handful of Italians and Spaniards. That which they considered to be their duty they performed. The work before them they did with all their might.

Alexander had vanquished the rebellion in the Celtic provinces, by the masterly diplomacy and liberal bribery which have been related in a former work. Artois, Hainault,

Douay, Orchies, with the rich cities of Lille, Tournay, Valenciennes, Arras, and other important places, were now the property of Philip. These unhappy and misguided lands, however, were already reaping the reward of their treason. Beggared, trampled upon, plundered, despised, they were at once the prey of the Spaniards, and the cause that their sister-states, which still held out, were placed in more desperate condition than ever. They were also, even in their abject plight, made still more forlorn by the forays of Balagny, who continued in command of Cambray. Catharine de' Medici claimed that city as her property, by will of the Duke of Anjou.¹ A strange title—founded upon the treason and cowardice of her favourite son—but one which, for a time, was made good by the possession maintained by Balagny. That usurper meantime, with a shrewd eye to his own interests, pronounced the truce of Cambray, which was soon afterwards arranged, from year to year, by permission of Philip, as a "most excellent milch-cow;"² and he continued to fill his pails at the expense of the "reconciled" provinces, till they were thoroughly exhausted.

This large south-western section of the Netherlands being thus permanently re-annexed to the Spanish crown, while Holland, Zeeland, and the other provinces, already constituting the new Dutch republic, were more obstinate in their hatred of Philip than ever, there remained the rich and fertile territory of Flanders and Brabant as the great debateable land. Here were the royal and political capital, Brussels, the commercial capital, Antwerp, with Mechlin, Dendermonde, Vilvoorde, and other places of inferior importance, all to be struggled for to the death. With the subjection of this district the last bulwark between the new commonwealth and the old empire would be overthrown, and Spain and Holland would then meet face to face.

If there had ever been a time when every nerve in Pro-

¹ Strada, II. 295.

² Le Petit II. 499.

testant Christendom should be strained to weld all those provinces together into one great commonwealth, as a bulwark for European liberty, rather than to allow them to be broken into stepping-stones, over which absolutism could stride across France and Holland into England, that moment had arrived. Every sacrifice should have been cheerfully made by all Netherlands, the uttermost possible subsidies and auxiliaries should have been furnished by all the friends of civil and religious liberty in every land to save Flanders and Brabant from their impending fate.

No man felt more keenly the importance of the business in which he was engaged than Parma. He knew his work exactly, and he meant to execute it thoroughly. Antwerp was the hinge on which the fate of the whole country, perhaps of all Christendom, was to turn. "If we get Antwerp," said the Spanish soldiers—so frequently that the expression passed into a proverb—"you shall all go to mass with us; if you save Antwerp, we will all go to conventicle with you."

Alexander rose with the difficulty and responsibility of his situation. His vivid, almost poetic intellect formed its schemes with perfect distinctness. Every episode in his great and, as he himself termed it, his "heroic enterprise," was traced out beforehand with the tranquil vision of creative genius; and he was prepared to convert his conceptions into reality, with the aid of an iron nature that never knew fatigue or fear.

But the obstacles were many. Alexander's master sat in his cabinet with his head full of Mucio, Don Antonio, and Queen Elizabeth; while Alexander himself was left neglected, almost forgotten. His army was shrinking to a nullity. The demands upon him were enormous, his finances delusive, almost exhausted. To drain an ocean dry he had nothing but a sieve. What was his position? He could bring into the field perhaps eight or ten thousand men over and above the necessary garrisons. He had before him Brussels, Antwerp, Mechlin, Ghent, Dendermonde, and other powerful

places, which he was to subjugate. Here was a problem not easy of solution. Given an army of eight thousand, more or less, to reduce therewith in the least possible time, half-a-dozen cities, each containing fifteen or twenty thousand men able to bear arms. To besiege these places in form was obviously a mere chimæra. Assault, battery, and surprises—these were all out of the question.

Yet Alexander was never more truly heroic than in this position of vast entanglement. Untiring, uncomplaining, thoughtful of others, prodigal of himself, generous, modest, brave ; with so much intellect and so much devotion to what he considered his duty, he deserved to be a patriot and a champion of the right, rather than an instrument of despotism.

And thus he paused for a moment—with much work already accomplished, but his hardest life-task before him ; still in the noon of manhood, a fine martial figure, standing, spear in hand, full in the sunlight, though all the scene around him was wrapped in gloom—a noble, commanding shape, entitled to the admiration which the energetic display of great powers, however unscrupulous, must always command. A dark, meridional physiognomy, a quick, alert, imposing head ; jet black, close-clipped hair ; a bold eagle's face, with full, bright, restless eye ; a man rarely reposing, always ready, never alarmed ; living in the saddle, with harness on his back—such was the Prince of Parma ; matured and mellowed, but still unharmed by time.

The cities of Flanders and Brabant he determined to reduce by gaining command of the Scheldt. The five principal ones—Ghent, Dendermonde, Mechlin, Brussels, Antwerp, lie in a narrow circle, at distances from each other varying from five miles to thirty, and are all strung together by the great Netherland river or its tributaries. His plan was immensely furthered by the success of Balthasar Gerard, an ally whom Alexander had despised and distrusted, even while he employed him. The assassination of Orange was better to Parma than forty thousand men. A crowd of allies instantly started

up for him, in the shape of treason, faintheartedness, envy, jealousy, insubordination, within the walls of every beleaguered city. Alexander knew well how to deal with those auxiliaries. Letters, artfully concocted, full of conciliation and of promise, were circulated in every council-room, in almost every house.

The surrender of Ghent—brought about by the governor's eloquence, aided by the golden arguments which he knew so well how to advance—had by the middle of September 19th Sept., put him in possession of West Flanders, with the 1584 important exception of the coast. Dendermonde capitulated at a still earlier day; while the fall of Brussels, which held out till many persons had been starved to death, was deferred till the 10th March of the following year, and that of Mechlin till midsummer.¹

The details of the military or political operations, by which the reduction of most of these places was effected, possess but little interest. The siege of Antwerp, however, was one of the most striking events of the age; and although the change in military tactics and the progress of science may have rendered this leaguer of less technical importance than it possessed in the sixteenth century, yet the illustration that it affords of the splendid abilities of Parma, of the most cultivated mode of warfare in use at that period, and of the internal politics by which the country was then regulated, make it necessary to dwell upon the details of an episode which must ever possess enduring interest.

It is agreeable to reflect, too, that the fame of the general is not polluted with the wholesale butchery, which has stained the reputation of other Spanish commanders so indelibly. There was no killing for the mere love of slaughter. With but few exceptions, there was no murder in cold blood; and the many lives that were laid down upon those watery dykes were sacrificed at least in bold, open combat; in a contest, the ruling spirits of which were patriotism, or at least honour.

¹ *Meteren*, xii. 217, *seq.*

It is instructive, too, to observe the diligence and accuracy with which the best lights of the age were brought to bear upon the great problem which Parma had undertaken to solve. All the science then at command was applied both by the Prince and by his burgher antagonists to the advancement of their ends. Hydrostatics, hydraulics, engineering, navigation, gunnery, pyrotechnics, mining, geometry, were summoned as broadly, vigorously, and intelligently to the destruction or preservation of a trembling city, as they have ever been, in more commercial days, to advance a financial or manufacturing purpose. Land converted into water, and water into land, castles built upon the breast of rapid streams, rivers turned from their beds and taught new courses; the distant ocean driven across ancient bulwarks, mines dug below the sea, and canals made to percolate obscene morasses—which the red hand of war, by the very act, converted into blooming gardens—a mighty stream bridged and mastered in the very teeth of winter, floating ice-bergs, ocean-tides, and an alert and desperate foe, ever ready with fleets and armies and batteries—such were the materials of which the great spectacle was composed; a spectacle which enchained the attention of Europe for seven months, and on the result of which, it was thought, depended the fate of all the Netherlands, and perhaps of all Christendom.

Antwerp, then the commercial centre of the Netherlands and of Europe, stands upon the Scheldt. The river, flowing straight, broad, and full along the verge of the city, subtends the arc into which the place arranges itself as it falls back from the shore. Two thousand ships of the largest capacity then known might easily find room in its ample harbours. The stream, nearly half a mile in width, and sixty feet in depth, with a tidal rise and fall of eleven feet, moves, for a few miles, in a broad and steady current between the provinces of Brabant and Flanders. Then, dividing itself into many ample estuaries, and gathering up the level isles of Zeeland into its bosom, it seems to sweep out with them into the northern ocean. Here, at the junction of the river and the

sea, lay the perpetual hope of Antwerp, for in all these creeks and currents swarmed the fleets of the Zeelanders, that hardy and amphibious race, with which few soldiers or mariners could successfully contend, on land or water.

Even from the beginning of the year 1584 Parma had been from time to time threatening Antwerp. The victim instinctively felt that its enemy was poising and hovering over head, although he still delayed to strike. Early in the summer Sainte Aldegonde, Recorder Martini, and other official personages, were at Delft, upon the occasion of the christening-ceremonies of Frederic Henry, youngest child of Orange. The Prince, at that moment, was aware of the plans of Parma, and held a long conversation with his friends upon the measures which he desired to see immediately undertaken. Unmindful of his usual hospitality, he insisted that these gentlemen should immediately leave for Antwerp. Alexander Farnese, he assured them, had taken the firm determination to possess himself of that place, without further delay. He had privately signified his purpose of laying the axe at once to the root of the tree, believing that with the fall of the commercial capital the infant confederacy of the United States would fall likewise. In order to accomplish this object, he would forthwith attempt to make himself master of the banks of the Scheldt, and would even throw a bridge across the stream, if his plans were not instantly circumvented.¹

William of Orange then briefly indicated his plan ; adding that he had no fears for the result ; and assuring his friends, who expressed much anxiety on the subject, that if Parma really did attempt the siege of Antwerp it should be his ruin. The plan was perfectly simple. The city stood upon a river. It was practicable, although extremely hazardous, for the enemy to bridge that river, and by so doing ultimately to reduce the place. But the ocean could not be bridged ; and it was quite possible to convert Antwerp, for a season, into an ocean-port. Standing alone upon an island, with the sea

¹ Bor, II. xix. 466.

flowing around it, and with full and free marine communication with Zeeland and Holland, it might safely bid defiance to the land-forces, even of so great a commander as Parma. To the furtherance of this great measure of defence, it was necessary to destroy certain bulwarks, the chief of ^{10th June,} which was called the Blaw-garen Dyke; and Sainte ^{1584.} Aldegonde was therefore requested to return to the city, in order to cause this task to be executed without delay.¹

Nothing could be more judicious than this advice. The low lands along the Scheldt were protected against marine encroachments, and the river itself was confined to its bed, by a magnificent system of dykes, which extended along its edge towards the ocean, in parallel lines. Other barriers of a similar nature ran in oblique directions, through the wide open pasture lands, which they maintained in green fertility, against the ever-threatening sea. The Blaw-garen, to which the prince mainly alluded, was connected with the great dyke upon the right bank of the Scheldt. Between this and the city, another bulwark called the Kowenstyn Dyke, crossed the country at right angles to the river, and joined the other two at a point, not very far from Lillo, where the States had a strong fortress.²

The country in this neighbourhood was low, spongy, full of creeks, small meres, and the old bed of the Scheldt. Orange, therefore, made it very clear, that by piercing the great dyke just described, such a vast body of water would be made to pour over the land as to submerge the Kowenstyn also, the only other obstacle in the passage of fleets from Zeeland to Antwerp. The city would then be connected with the sea and its islands, by so vast an expanse of navigable water, that any attempt on Parma's part to cut off supplies and succour would be hopeless. Antwerp would laugh the idea of famine to scorn; and although this immunity would be purchased by the sacrifice of a large amount of agricultural territory the price so paid was but a slender one, when the

¹ Bor, *ubi sup.* Meteren, xii. 216-18.

² Bor, Meteren, *ubi sup.* Hooffd Vervolgh, 4, *seq.*

existence of the capital, and with it perhaps of the whole confederacy was at stake.¹

Sainte Aldegonde and Martini suggested, that, as there would be some opposition to the measure proposed, it might be as well to make a similar attempt on the Flemish side, in preference, by breaking through the dykes in the neighbourhood of Saftingen. Orange replied, by demonstrating that the land in the region which he had indicated was of a character to ensure success, while in the other direction there were certain very unfavourable circumstances which rendered the issue doubtful.² The result was destined to prove the sagacity of the Prince, for it will be shown in the sequel, that the Saftingen plan, afterwards really carried out, was rather advantageous than detrimental to the enemy's projects.

Sainte Aldegonde, accordingly, yielded to the arguments and entreaties of his friend, and repaired without delay to Antwerp.

The advice of William the Silent—as will soon be related—was not acted upon; and, within a few weeks after it had been given, he was in his grave. Nowhere was his loss more severely felt than in Antwerp. It seemed, said a contemporary, that with his death had died all authority.³ The Prince was the only head which the many-membered body of that very democratic city ever spontaneously obeyed. Antwerp was a small republic—in time of peace intelligently and successfully administered—which in the season of a great foreign war, amid plagues, tumults, famine, and internal rebellion, required the firm hand and the clear brain of a single chief. That brain and hand had been possessed by Orange alone.

Before his death he had desired that Sainte Aldegonde should accept the office of burgomaster of the city. Nominally, the position was not so elevated as were many of the posts which that distinguished patriot had filled. In reality, it was as responsible and arduous a place as could be offered

¹ Bor, *Meteren*, *ubi sup.* Hoofd Vervolgh, 4 *seq.*

² *Ibid.*

³ *Reyd*, iv. 59.

to any man's acceptance throughout the country. Sainte Aldegonde consented, not without some reluctance. He felt that there was odium to be incurred; he knew that much would be expected of him, and that his means would be limited. His powers would be liable to a constant and various restraint. His measures were sure to be the subject of perpetual cavil. If the city were besieged, there were nearly one hundred thousand mouths to feed, and nearly one hundred thousand tongues to dispute about furnishing the food.

For the government of Antwerp had been degenerating from a well-organised municipal republicanism into anarchy. The clashing of the various bodies exercising power had become incessant and intolerable.¹ The burgomaster was charged with the chief executive authority, both for peace and war. Nevertheless he had but a single vote in the board of magistrates, where a majority decided. Moreover, he could not always attend the sessions, because he was also member of the council of Brabant. Important measures might therefore be decided by the magistracy, not only against his judgment, but without his knowledge. Then there was a variety of boards or colleges, all arrogating concurrent—which in truth was conflicting—authority. There was the board of militia-colonels, which claimed great powers. Here, too, the burgomaster was nominally the chief, but he might be voted down by a majority, and of course was often absent. Then there were sixteen captains who came into the colonels' sessions whenever they liked, and had their word to say upon all subjects broached. If they were refused a hearing, they were backed by eighty other captains, who were ready at any moment to carry every disputed point before the "broad-council."

There were a college of ward-masters, a college of select men, a college of deacons, a college of ammunition, of fortification, of ship-building, all claiming equal authority, and all wrangling among themselves; and there was a college of "peace-makers," who wrangled more than all the rest together.

¹ *Meteren*, xii. 218. Guicciardini, *in voce*.

Once a week there was a session of the board or general council. Dire was the hissing and confusion, as the hydra heads of the multitudinous government were laid together. Heads of colleges, presidents of chambers, militia-chieftains, magistrates, ward-masters, deans of fishmongers, of tailors, gardeners, butchers, all met together pell-mell; and there was no predominant authority. This was not a convenient working machinery for a city threatened with a siege by the first captain of the age. Moreover there was a deficiency of regular troops. The burgher-militia were well trained and courageous, but not distinguished for their docility. There was also a regiment of English under Colonel Morgan, a soldier of great experience, and much respected; but, as Stephen Le Sieur said, "this force, unless seconded with more, was but a breakfast for the enemy." Unfortunately, too, the insubordination, which was so ripe in the city, seemed to affect these auxiliaries. A mutiny broke out among the English troops. Many deserted to Parma, some escaped to England, and it was not until Morgan had beheaded Captain Lee and Captain Powell,¹ that discipline could be restored.

And into this scene of wild and deafening confusion came Philip de Marnix, Lord of Sainte Aldegonde.

There were few more brilliant characters than he in all Christendom. He was a man of a most rare and versatile genius. Educated in Geneva at the very feet of Calvin, he had drunk, like mother's milk, the strong and bitter waters of the stern reformer's creed; but he had in after life attempted, although hardly with success, to lift himself to the height of a general religious toleration. He had also been trained in the severe and thorough literary culture which characterised that rigid school. He was a scholar, ripe and rare; no holiday trifler in the gardens of learning. He spoke and wrote Latin like his native tongue. He could compose poignant Greek epigrams. He was so familiar with Hebrew, that he had rendered the Psalms of David out of the original into flowing Flemish verse, for the use of the

¹ Meteren, xii. 218.

reformed churches. That he possessed the modern tongues of civilized Europe, Spanish, Italian, French, and German, was a matter of course. He was a profound jurisconsult, capable of holding debate against all competitors upon any point of theory or practice of law, civil, municipal, international. He was a learned theologian, and had often proved himself a match for the doctors, bishops, or rabbins of Europe, in highest argument of dogma, creed, or tradition. He was a practised diplomatist, constantly employed in delicate and difficult negotiations by William the Silent, who ever admired his genius, cherished his friendship, and relied upon his character. He was an eloquent orator, whose memorable harangue, beyond all his other efforts, at the diet of Worms, had made the German princes hang their heads with shame, when, taking a broad and philosophical view of the Netherland matter, he had shown that it was the great question of Europe ; that Nether Germany was all Germany ; that Protestantism could not be unravelled into shreds ; that there was but one cause in Christendom—that of absolutism against national liberty, Papacy against the reform ; and that the seventeen Provinces were to be assisted in building themselves into an eternal barrier against Spain, or that the “burning mark of shame would be branded upon the forehead of Germany ;” that the war, in short, was to be met by her on the threshold, or else that it would come to seek her at home—a prophecy which the horrible Thirty Years’ War was in after time most signally to verify.

He was a poet of vigour and originality, for he had accomplished what has been achieved by few ; he had composed a national hymn, whose strophes, as soon as heard, struck a chord in every Netherland heart, and for three centuries long have rung like a clarion wherever the Netherland tongue is spoken. “Wilhelmus van Nassouwe,” regarded simply as a literary composition, has many of the qualities which an ode demands ; an electrical touch upon the sentiments, a throb of patriotism, sympathetic tenderness, a dash of indignation, with rhythmical harmony and graceful expression ; and thus

it has rung from millions of lips, from generation to generation.

He was a soldier, courageous, untiring, prompt in action, useful in council, and had distinguished himself in many a hard-fought field. Taken prisoner in the sanguinary skirmish at Maaslandssluis, he had been confined a year, and, for more than three months, had never laid his head, as he declared, upon the pillow without commending his soul as for the last time to his Maker, expecting daily the order for his immediate execution, and escaping his doom only because William the Silent proclaimed that the proudest head among the Spanish prisoners should fall to avenge his death ; so that he was ultimately exchanged against the veteran Mondragon.

From the incipient stages of the revolt he had been foremost among the patriots. He was supposed to be the author of the famous "Compromise of the Nobles," that earliest and most conspicuous of the state-papers of the republic, and of many other important political documents ; and he had contributed to general literature many works of European celebrity, of which the 'Roman Bee-Hive' was the most universally known.

Scholar, theologian, diplomatist, swordsman, orator, poet, pamphleteer, he had genius for all things, and was eminent in all. He was even famous for his dancing, and had composed an intelligent and philosophical treatise upon the value of that amusement, as an agent of civilisation, and as a counteractor of the grosser pleasures of the table to which Upper and Nether Germans were too much addicted.

Of ancient Savoyard extraction, and something of a southern nature, he had been born in Brussels, and was national to the heart's core.

A man of interesting, sympathetic presence ; of a physiognomy where many of the attaching and attractive qualities of his nature revealed themselves ; with crisp curling hair, surmounting a tall, expansive forehead—full of benevolence, idealism, and quick perceptions ; broad, brown, melancholy

eyes, overflowing with tenderness ; a lean and haggard cheek, a rugged Flemish nose ; a thin flexible mouth ; a slender moustache, and a peaked and meagre beard ; so appeared Sainte Aldegonde in the forty-seventh year of his age, when he came to command in Antwerp.

Yet after all—many-sided, accomplished, courageous, energetic, as he was—it may be doubted whether he was the man for the hour or the post. He was too impressionable ; he had too much of the temperament of genius. Without being fickle, he had, besides his versatility of intellect, a character which had much facility in turning ; not, indeed, in the breeze of self-interest, but because he seemed placed in so high and clear an atmosphere of thought that he was often acted upon and swayed by subtle and invisible influences. At any rate his conduct was sometimes inexplicable. He had been strangely fascinated by the ignoble Duke of Anjou ; and, in the sequel, it will be found that he was destined to experience other magnetic or magical impulses, which were once thought suspicious, and have remained mysterious even to the present day.

He was imaginative. He was capable of broad and boundless hopes. He was sometimes prone to deep despair. His nature was exquisitely tempered ; too fine and polished a blade to be wielded among those hydra-heads by which he was now surrounded ; and for which the stunning sledgehammer of arbitrary force was sometimes necessary.

He was perhaps deficient in that gift, which no training and no culture can bestow, and which comes from above alone by birth-right divine—that which men willingly call master, authority ; the effluence which came so naturally from the tranquil eyes of William the Silent.

Nevertheless, Sainte Aldegonde was prepared to do his best, and all his best was to be tasked to the utmost. His position was rendered still more difficult by the unruly nature of some of his co-ordinates.

“From the first day to the last,” said one who lived in

Antwerp during the siege, "the mistakes committed in the city were incredible."¹ It had long been obvious that a siege was contemplated by Parma. A liberal sum of money had been voted by the States-General, of which Holland and Zeeland contributed a very large proportion (two hundred thousand florins); the city itself voted another large subsidy, and an order was issued to purchase at once and import into the city at least a year's supply of every kind of provisions of life and munitions of war.²

William de Blois, Lord of Treslong, Admiral of Holland and Zeeland, was requested to carry out this order, and superintend the victualling of Antwerp. But Treslong at once became troublesome. He was one of the old "beggars of the sea," a leader in the wild band who had taken possession of the Brill, in the teeth of Alva, and so laid the foundation of the republic. An impetuous noble, of wealthy family, high connections, and refractory temper—a daring sailor, ever ready for any rash adventure, but possessed of a very moderate share of prudence or administrative ability, he fell into loose and lawless courses on the death of Orange, whose firm hand was needed to control him. The French negotiation had excited his profound disgust, and knowing Sainte Aldegonde to be heart and soul in favour of that alliance, he was in no haste whatever to carry out his orders with regard to Antwerp.³ He had also an insignificant quarrel with President Meetkerk. The Prince of Parma—ever on the watch for such opportunities—was soon informed of the Admiral's discontent, and had long been acquainted with his turbulent character. Alexander at once began to inflame his jealousy and soothe his vanity by letters and messengers, urging upon him the propriety of reconciling himself with the King, and promising him large rewards and magnificent employments in the royal service. Even the splendid insignia of the Golden Fleece were dangled before his eyes. It is certain that the bold Hollander was not seduced by these visions, but there is

¹ *Le Petit*, II. 516.² *Le Petit*, II. 500.³ *Strado*, II. 332, *seq.*

no doubt that he listened to the voice of the tempter. He unquestionably neglected his duty. Week after week he remained at Ostend, sneering at the French and quaffing huge draughts in honour of Queen Elizabeth. At last, after much time had elapsed, he agreed to victual Antwerp if he could be furnished with thirty krom-stevens,—a peculiar kind of vessel, not to be found in Zeeland. The krom-stevens were sent to him from Holland. Then, hearing that his negligence had been censured by the States-General, he became more obstinate than ever, and went up and down proclaiming that if people made themselves disagreeable to him he would do that which should make all the women and children in the Netherlands shriek and tremble. What this nameless horror was to be he never divulged, but meantime he went down to Middelburg, and swore that not a boat-load of corn should go up to Antwerp until two members of the magistracy, whom he considered unpleasant, had been dismissed from their office. Wearied with all this bluster, and imbued with grave suspicion as to his motives, the States at last rose upon their High Admiral and threw him into prison. He was accused of many high crimes and misdemeanours, and, it was thought, would be tried for his life. He was suspected and even openly accused of having been tampered with by Spain, but there was at any rate a deficiency of proof.

“Treslong is apprehended,” wrote Davison to Burghley, “and is charged to have been the cause that the fleet passed not up to Antwerp. He is suspected to have otherwise forgotten himself, but whether justly or not will appear by his trial. Meantime he is kept in the common prison of Middelburg, a treatment which it is thought they would not offer him if they had not somewhat of importance against him.”¹

He was subsequently released at the intercession of Queen Elizabeth, and passed some time in England. He was afterwards put upon trial, but no accuser appearing to sustain the charges against him, he was eventually released. He never received a command in the navy again, but the very rich

¹ Davison to Burghley and Walsingham, Feb. 28, 1585. S. P. Office MS.

sinecures of Grand Falconer and Chief Forester of Holland were bestowed upon him, and he appears to have ended his days in peace and plenty.¹

He was succeeded in the post of Admiral of Holland and Zeeland by Justinus de Nassau, natural son of William the Silent, a young man of much promise but of little experience.²

General Count Hohenlo, too, lieutenant for young Maurice, and virtual commander-in-chief of the States' forces, was apt to give much trouble. A German noble, of ancient descent and princely rank, brave to temerity, making a jest of danger, and riding into a foray as if to a merry-making; often furiously intoxicated, and always turbulent and uncertain; a handsome, dissipated cavalier, with long curls floating over his shoulders, an imposing aristocratic face, and a graceful, athletic figure, he needed some cool brain and steady hand to guide him—valuable as he was to fulfil any daring project—but was hardly willing to accept the authority of a burgomaster. While the young Maurice yet needed tutelage, while “the sapling was growing into the tree,” Hohenlo was a dangerous chieftain and a most disorderly lieutenant.

With such municipal machinery and such coadjutors had Sainte Aldegonde to deal, while, meantime, the delusive French negotiation was dragging its slow length along, and while Parma was noiselessly and patiently proceeding with his preparations.

The burgomaster—for Sainte Aldegonde, in whom vulgar ambition was not a foible, had refused the dignity and title of Margrave of Antwerp, which had been tendered him—had neglected no effort towards carrying into effect the advice of Orange, given almost with his latest breath. The manner in which that advice was received furnished a striking illustration of the defective machinery which has been portrayed.

Upon his return from Delft, Sainte Aldegonde had summoned a meeting of the magistracy of Antwerp. He laid

¹ Strada, II. 332, *seq.* Rayd, iv. 59. Bor. II. xx. 570-594. Wagenaar, viii. 24-27. Meteren, xii. 218.

² Ibid.

before the board the information communicated by June, 1584. Orange as to Parma's intentions. He also explained the scheme proposed for their frustration, and urged the measures indicated with so much earnestness that his fellow-magistrates were convinced. The order was passed for piercing the Blauw-garen Dyke, and Sainte Aldegonde, with some engineers, was requested to view the locality, and to take order for the immediate fulfilment of the plan.¹

Unfortunately there were many other boards in session besides that of the Schepens, many other motives at work besides those of patriotism. The guild of butchers held a meeting, so soon as the plan suggested was known, and resolved with all their strength to oppose its execution.

The butchers were indeed furious. Twelve thousand oxen grazed annually upon the pastures which were about to be submerged, and it was represented as unreasonable that all this good flesh and blood should be sacrificed. At a meeting of the magistrates on the following day, sixteen butchers, delegates from their guild, made their appearance, hoarse with indignation. They represented the vast damage which would be inflicted upon the estates of many private individuals by the proposed inundation, by this sudden conversion of teeming meadows, fertile farms, thriving homesteads, prolific orchards, into sandy desolation. Above all they depicted, in glowing colours and with natural pathos, the vast destruction of beef which was imminent, and they urged—with some show of reason—that if Parma were really about to reduce Antwerp by famine, his scheme certainly would not be obstructed by the premature annihilation of these wholesome supplies.²

That the Scheldt could be closed in any manner was, however, they said, a preposterous conception. That it could be bridged was the dream of a lunatic. Even if it were possible to construct a bridge, and probable that the Zeelanders and Antwerpers would look on with folded arms while the

¹ Bor. II. 467.

² Bor. II. 467, *seq.* Meteren, xii. 216-218, *seq.* Hoofd Vervolgh, 4, *seq.*

work proceeded, the fabric, when completed, would be at the mercy of the ice-floods of the winter and the enormous power of the ocean-tides. The Prince of Orange himself, on a former occasion, when Antwerp was Spanish, had attempted to close the river with rafts, sunken piles, and other obstructions, but the whole had been swept away, like a dam of bulrushes, by the first descent of the ice-blocks of winter. It was witless to believe that Parma contemplated any such measure, and utterly monstrous to believe in its success.¹

| Thus far the butchers. Soon afterwards came sixteen colonels of militia, as representatives of their branch of the multiform government. These personages, attended by many officers of inferior degree, sustained the position of the butchers with many voluble and vehement arguments. Not the least convincing of their conclusions was the assurance that it would be idle for the authorities to attempt the destruction of the dyke, seeing that the municipal soldiery itself would prevent the measure by main force, at all hazards, and without regard to their own or others' lives.

The violence of this opposition, and the fear of a serious internecine conflict at so critical a juncture, proved fatal to the project. Much precious time was lost, and when at last the inhabitants of the city awoke from their delusion, it was to find that repentance, as usual, had come many hours too late.²

For Parma had been acting while his antagonists had been wrangling. He was hampered in his means, but he was assisted by what now seems the incredible supineness of the Netherlanders. Even Sainte Aldegonde did not believe in the possibility of erecting the bridge; not a man in Antwerp seemed to believe it. "The preparations," said one who lived in the city, "went on before our very noses, and every one was ridiculing the Spanish commander's folly."³

A very great error was, moreover, committed in abandoning Herenthals to the enemy. The city of Antwerp governed

¹ Bor. Meteren, Hoofd, *ubi sup.* Le Petit, II. 500, *seq.*

² Ibid.

³ Le Petit, II. 498, 499.

Brabant, and it would have been far better for the authorities of the commercial capital to succour this small but important city, and, by so doing, to protract for a long time their own defence. Mondragon saw and rejoiced over the mistake. "Now 'tis easy to see that the Prince of Orange is dead," said the veteran, as he took possession, in the King's name, of the forsaken Herenthals.¹

Early in the summer, Parma's operations had been, of necessity, desultory. He had sprinkled forts up and down the Scheldt, and had gradually been gaining control of the navigation upon that river. Thus Ghent and Dendermonde, Vilvoorde, Brussels, and Antwerp, had each been isolated, and all prevented from rendering mutual assistance. Below Antwerp, however, was to be the scene of the great struggle. Here, within nine miles of the city, were two forts belonging to the States, on opposite sides of the stream, Lillo and Liefkenshoek. It was important for the Spanish commander to gain possession of both, before commencing his contemplated bridge.

Unfortunately for the States, the fortifications of Liefkenshoek, on the Flemish side of the river, had not been entirely completed. Eight hundred men lay within it, under Colonel John Pettin of Arras, an old patriotic officer of much experience. Parma, after reconnoitring the place in person, despatched the famous Viscount of Ghent—now called Marquis of Roubaix and Richebourg—to carry it by assault. The Marquis sent one hundred men from his Walloon legion, under two officers, in whom he had confidence, to attempt a surprise, with orders, if not successful, to return without delay. They were successful. The one hundred gained entrance into the fort at a point where the defences had not been put into sufficient repair.

They were immediately followed by Richebourg, at the head of his regiment. The day was a fatal one. It was the 10th July, 1584, the 10th July, and William of Orange was falling at Delft by the hand of Balthazar Gerard. Lief-

¹ Reyd, iv. 59.

kenshoek was carried at a blow. Of the eight hundred patriots in the place, scarcely a man escaped. Four hundred were put to the sword, the others were hunted into the river, when nearly all were drowned. Of the royalists *a single man* was killed, and two or three more were wounded. "Our Lord was pleased," wrote Parma piously to Philip, that we "should cut the throats of four hundred of them in a single instant, and that a great many more should be killed upon the dykes; so that I believe very few to have escaped with life. We lost one man, besides two or three wounded."¹ A few were taken prisoners, and among them was the commander John Pettin. He was at once brought before Richebourg, who was standing in the presence of the Prince of Parma. The Marquis drew his sword, walked calmly up to the captured Colonel, and ran him through the body. Pettin fell dead upon the spot. The Prince was displeased. "Too much choler, Marquis, too much choler,"—said he reprovingly. "Troppa colera, Signor Marchese, é questa."² But Richebourg knew better. He had, while still Viscount of Ghent, carried on a year previously a parallel intrigue with the royalists and the patriots. The Prince of Parma had bid highest for his services, and had, accordingly, found him a most effectual instrument in completing the reduction of the Walloon Provinces. The Prince was not aware, however, that his brave but venal ally had, at the very same moment, been secretly treating with William of Orange; and as it so happened that Colonel Pettin had been the agent in the unsuccessful negotiation, it was possible that his duplicity would now be exposed.³ The Marquis had, therefore, been prompt to place his old confederate in the condition wherein men tell no tales, and if contemporary chronicles did not bely him, it was not the first

¹ "Y fue nuestro Señor servido que entrassen con sola perdida de un muerto y 2 o 3 heridos, y que se desgollasen hasta 400 hombres en el mismo instante, y que se matassen en los diques muchos—de manera que creo que han quedado pocos con

vida." Parma to Philip II., 15 July, 1584. Archivo de Simancas MR, Compare Bor., II. 469, *seq.* Meteren, xii. 218vo. Strada, II. 304, *seq.*

² Meteren, xii. 218.

³ Ibid.

time that he had been guilty of such cold-blooded murder. The choler had not been superfluous.

The fortress of Lillo was garrisoned by the Antwerp volunteers, called the "Young Bachelors." Teligny, the brave son of the illustrious "Iron-armed" La Noue, commanded in chief: and he had, besides the militia, a company of French under Captain Gascoigne, and four hundred Scotchmen under Colonel Morgan—perhaps two thousand men in all.

Mondragon, hero of the famous submarine expeditions of Philipsland and Zierickzee, was ordered by Parma to take the place at every hazard. With five thousand men—a large proportion of the Spanish effective force at that moment—the veteran placed himself before the fort, taking possession of the beautiful country-house and farm of Lillo, where he planted his batteries, and commenced a regular cannonade. The place was stronger than Liefkenshoek, however, and Teligny thoroughly comprehended the importance of maintaining it for the States. Mondragon dug mines, and Teligny countermined. The Spanish daily cannonade was cheerfully responded to by the besieged, and by the time Mondragon had shot away fifty thousand pounds of powder, he found that he had made no impression upon the fortress, while the number of his troops had been diminishing with great rapidity. Mondragon was not so impetuous as he had been on many former occasions. He never ventured an assault. At last Teligny made a sortie at the head of a considerable force. A warm action succeeded, at the conclusion of which, without a decided advantage on either side, the sluice-gate in the fortress was opened, and the torrent of the Scheldt, swollen by a high tide, was suddenly poured upon the Spaniards. Assailed at once by the fire from the Lillo batteries, and by the waters of the river, they were forced to a rapid retreat. This they effected with great loss, but with signal courage, struggling breast high in the waves, and bearing off their field-pieces in their arms in the very face of the enemy.¹

¹ Hoofd, Vervolgh, 7, 8. Strada, II. 304, seq. Bor., II. 469, seq. Motoren. xii. 218.

Three weeks long Mondragon had been before Fort Lillo, and two thousand of his soldiers had been slain in the trenches. The attempt was now abandoned. Parma directed permanent batteries to be established at Lillo-house, at Oordam, and at other places along the river, and proceeded quietly with his carefully-matured plan for closing the river.¹

His own camp was in the neighbourhood of the villages of Beveren, Kalloo, and Borght. Of the ten thousand foot and seventeen hundred horse, which composed at the moment his whole army, about one-half lay with him, while the remainder were with Count Peter Ernest Mansfeld, in the neighbourhood of Stabroek. Thus the Prince occupied a position on the left bank of the Scheldt, nearly opposite Antwerp, while Mansfeld was stationed upon the right bank, and ten miles farther down the river. From a point in the neighbourhood of Kalloo, Alexander intended to throw a fortified bridge to the opposite shore. When completed, all traffic up the river from Zeeland would be cut off; and as the country on the land-side, about Antwerp, had been now reduced, the city would be effectually isolated. If the Prince could hold his bridge until famine should break the resistance of the burghers, Antwerp would fall into his hands.

His head-quarters were at Kalloo, and this obscure spot soon underwent a strange transformation. A drowsy placid little village—with a modest parish spire peeping above a clump of poplars, and with half a dozen cottages, with storks'-nests on their roofs, sprinkled here and there among pastures and orchards—suddenly saw itself changed as it were into a thriving bustling town; for, saving the white tents which dotted the green turf in every direction, the aspect of the scene was, for a time, almost pacific. It was as if some great manufacturing enterprise had been set on foot, and the world had suddenly awoke to the hidden capabilities of the situation.

A great dockyard and arsenal suddenly revealed themselves—rising like an exhalation—where ship-builders, ar-

¹ Meteren, xii. 218.

mourers, blacksmiths, joiners, carpenters, caulkers, graveurs, were hard at work all day long. The din and hum of what seemed a peaceful industry were unceasing. From Kalloo, Parma dug a canal twelve miles long to a place called Steeken, hundreds of pioneers being kept constantly at work with pick and spade till it was completed. Through this artificial channel—so soon as Ghent and Dendermonde had fallen—came floats of timber, fleets of boats laden with provisions of life and munitions of death, building-materials, and every other requisite for the great undertaking, all to be disembarked at Kalloo. The object was a temporary and destructive one, but it remains a monument of the great general's energy and a useful public improvement. The amelioration of the fenny and barren soil, called the Waeland, is dated from that epoch; and the spot in Europe which is the most prolific, and which nourishes the largest proportion of inhabitants to the square mile, is precisely the long dreary swamp which the Prince thus drained for military purposes, and converted into a garden. Drusus and Corbulo, in the days of the Roman Empire, had done the same good service for their barbarian foes.

At Kalloo itself, all the shipwrights, cutlers, masons, brass-founders, rope-makers, anchor-forgers, sailors, boatmen, of Flanders and Brabant, with a herd of bakers, brewers, and butchers, were congregated by express order of Parma. In the little church itself the main workshop was established, and all day long, week after week, month after month, the sound of saw and hammer, adze and plane, the rattle of machinery, the cry of sentinels, the cheers of mariners, resounded, where but lately had been heard nothing save the drowsy homily and the devout hymn of rustic worship.¹

Nevertheless the summer and autumn wore on, and still the bridge was hardly commenced. The navigation of the river—although impeded and rendered dangerous by the

¹ Hooft, *Bor. Meteren*, *ubi sup.*
Le Petit, II, 509, *seq.* Reynd, iv. 58,
59. Strada, II 321, *seq.* V. d. Kampen,

I 482. Bentivoglio, 'Guerra di Fian-
dra,' P. II. L. III.

forts which Parma held along the banks—was still open; and, so long as the price of corn in Antwerp remained three or four times as high as the sum for which it could be purchased in Holland and Zeeland, there were plenty of dare-devil skippers ready to bring cargoes. Fleets of fly-boats, convoyed by armed vessels, were perpetually running the gauntlet. Sharp actions on shore between the forts of the patriots and those of Parma, which were all intermingled promiscuously along the banks, and amphibious and most bloody encounters on ship-board, dyke, and in the stream itself, between the wild Zeelanders and the fierce pikemen of Italy and Spain, were of repeated occurrence. Many a lagging craft fell into the enemy's hands, when, as a matter of course, the men, women, and children, on board, were horribly mutilated by the Spaniards, and were then sent drifting in their boat with the tide—their arms, legs, and ears lopped off—up to the city, in order that the dangerous nature of this provision-trade might be fully illustrated.¹

Yet that traffic still went on. It would have continued until Antwerp had been victualled for more than a year, had not the city authorities, in the plenitude of their ^{25th Oct.,} wisdom, thought proper to issue orders for its regu- ^{1584.} lation. On the 25th October a census was taken, when the number of persons inside the walls was found to be ninety thousand. For this population it was estimated that 300,000 veertels, or about 900,000 bushels of corn, would be required annually.² The grain was coming in very fast, notwithstanding the perilous nature of the trade; for wheat could be bought in Holland for fifty florins the last, or about fifteen pence sterling the bushel, while it was worth five or six florins the veertel, or about four shillings the bushel, in Antwerp.³

The magistrates now committed a folly more stupendous than it seemed possible for human creatures, under such cir-

¹ "Bien est vray qu'il en arrivait *journellement* aucunes qui amenoient des hommes et des femmes, les uns tuez, les autres sans bras, ny jambes, mais tout cela n'empeschoit point le

passage pourtant," &c. Le Petit, iv, 500. The historian was in Antwerp during the siege.

² Bor, III. 500.

³ Meteren, Bor, *ubi sup.*

cumstances, to compass. They established a maximum upon corn.¹ The skippers who had run their cargoes through the gauntlet, all the way from Flushing to Antwerp, found on their arrival, that, instead of being rewarded, according to the natural laws of demand and supply, they were required to exchange their wheat, rye, butter, and beef, against the exact sum which the Board of Schepens thought proper to consider a reasonable remuneration. Moreover, in order to prevent the accumulation of provisions in private magazines, it was enacted, that all consumers of grain should be compelled to make their purchases directly from the ships.² These two measures were almost as fatal as the preservation of the Blaw-garen Dyke, in the interest of the butchers. Winter and famine were staring the city in the face, and the maximum now stood sentinel against the gate, to prevent the admission of food. The traffic ceased without a struggle. Parma himself could not have better arranged the blockade.

Meantime a vast and almost general inundation had taken place. The aspect of the country for many miles around was strange and desolate. The sluices had been opened in the neighbourhood of Saftingen, on the Flemish side, so that all the way from Hulst the waters were out, and flowed nearly to the gates of Antwerp. A wide and shallow sea rolled over the fertile plains, while church-steeple, the tops of lofty trees, and here and there the turrets of a castle, scarcely lifted themselves above the black waters; the peasants' houses, the granges, whole rural villages, having entirely disappeared. The high grounds of Doel, of Kalloo, and Beveren, where Alexander was established, remained out of reach of the flood. Far below, on the opposite side of the river, other sluices had been opened, and the sea had burst over the wide, level plain. The villages of Wilmerdonk, Ordenen, Ekeren, were changed to islands in the ocean, while all the other hamlets, for miles around, were utterly submerged.³

¹ Reyd, iv. 59. Bor, Meteren, *ubi sup.*

² Reyd, Bor, Meteren.

³ Bor, Meteren, Hoofd, Le Petit, Reyd, *ubi sup.*

Still, however, the Blaw-garen Dyke and its companion the Kowenstyn remained obstinately above the waters, forming a present and more fatal obstruction to the communication between Antwerp and Zeeland than would be furnished even by the threatened and secretly-advancing bridge across the Scheldt. Had Orange's prudent advice been taken, the city had been safe. Over the prostrate dykes, whose destruction he had so warmly urged, the ocean would have rolled quite to the gates of Antwerp, and it would have been as easy to bridge the North Sea as to control the free navigation of the patriots over so wide a surface.

When it was too late, the butchers, and colonels, and captains, became penitent enough. An order was passed, by acclamation, in November, to do what Orange had recommended in June. It was decreed that the Blaw-garen and the Kowenstyn should be pierced.¹ Alas, the hour had long gone by. Alexander of Parma was not the man to undertake the construction of a bridge across the river, at a vast expense, and at the same time to permit the destruction of the already existing barrier. There had been a time for such a deed. The Seigneur de Kowenstyn, who had a castle and manor on and near the dyke which bore his name, had repeatedly urged upon the Antwerp magistracy the propriety of piercing this bulwark, even after their refusal to destroy the outer barrier. Sainte Aldegonde, who vehemently urged the measure, protested that his hair had stood on end, when he found, after repeated entreaty, that the project was rejected.² The Seigneur de Kowenstyn, disgusted and indignant, forswore his patriotism, and went over to Parma.³ The dyke fell into the hands of the enemy. And now from Stabroek, where old Mansfeld lay with his army, all the way across the flooded country, ran the great bulwark, strengthened with new palisade-work and block-houses, bristling with Spanish cannon, pike, and arque-

¹ Bor, II. 500.

² Mertens en Torp. Geschiedenis van Antwerpen, v. 206. Papebrochii,

'Annales Antwerpienses,' iv. 100, *seq.*

³ Bor, Meteren Mertens en Torp, *ubi sup.*

bus, even to the bank of the Scheldt, in the immediate vicinity of Fort Lillo. At the angle of its junction with the main dyke of the river's bank, a strong fortress called Holy Cross (Santa Cruz) had been constructed. That fortress and the whole line of the Kowenstyn were held in the iron grip of Mondragon. To wrench it from him would be no child's play. Five new strong redoubts upon the dyke, and five or six thousand Spaniards established there, made the enterprise more formidable than it would have been in June. It had been better to sacrifice the twelve thousand oxen. Twelve thousand Hollanders might now be slaughtered, and still the dyke remain above the waves.

Here was the key to the fate of Antwerp.

On the other hand, the opening of the Saftingen Sluice had done Parma's work for him. Even there, too, Orange had been prophetic. Kalloo was high and dry, but Alexander had experienced some difficulty in bringing a fleet of thirty vessels, laden with cannon and other valuable materials, from Ghent along the Scheldt, into his encampment, because it was necessary for them, before reaching their destination, to pass in front of Antwerp. The inundation, together with a rupture in the Dyke of Borght, furnished him with a watery road, over which his fleet completely avoided the city, and came in triumph to Kalloo.¹

Sainte Aldegonde, much provoked by this masterly movement on the part of Parma, had followed the little squadron closely with some armed vessels from the city. A sharp action had succeeded, in which the burgomaster, not being properly sustained by the Zeeland ships on which he relied, had been defeated. Admiral Jacob Jacobzoon behaved with so little spirit on the occasion that he acquired with the Antwerp populace the name of "Run-away Jacob," "Koppen gaet loppen;" and Sainte Aldegonde declared, that, but for his cowardice, the fleet of Parma would have fallen into their hands. The burgomaster himself narrowly escaped becoming

¹ Meteren, xii. 228. Bor, II. 501.

a prisoner, and owed his safety only to the swiftness of his barge, which was called the 'Flying Devil.'

The patriots, in order to counteract similar enterprises in future, now erected a sconce, which they called Fort Teligny, upon the ruptured dyke of Borgh, directly in front of the Borgh blockhouse, belonging to the Spaniards, and just opposite Fort Hoboken. Here, in this narrow passage, close under the walls of Antwerp, where friends and foes were brought closely, face to face, was the scene of many a sanguinary skirmish, from the commencement of the siege until its close.¹

Still the bridge was believed to be a mere fable, a chimæra. Parma, men said, had become a lunatic from pride. It was as easy to make the Netherlands submit to the yoke of the Inquisition as to put a bridle on the Scheldt. Its depth, breadth, the ice-floods of a northern winter, the neighbourhood of the Zeeland fleets, the activity of the Antwerp authorities, all were pledges that the attempt would be signally frustrated.²

And they should have been pledges—more than enough. Unfortunately, however, there was dissension within, and no chieftain in the field, no sage in the council, of sufficient authority to sustain the whole burthen of the war, and to direct all the energies of the commonwealth. Orange was dead. His son, one day to become the most illustrious military commander in Europe, was a boy of seventeen, nominally captain-general, but in reality but a youthful apprentice to his art. Hohenlo was wild, wilful, and obstinate. Young William Lewis Nassau, already a soldier of marked abilities, was fully occupied in Friesland, where he was stadholder, and where he had quite enough to do in making head against the Spanish governor and general, the veteran Verdugo. Military operations against Zutphen distracted the attention of the States, which should have been fixed upon Antwerp.

¹ Harael, 'Ann. Tum. Belg.,' III. 369. Bor, II. 501. Metaren, xii. 218, seq.

² Ibid.

³ Strada, II. 312, 313. Reynd, iv. 58, 59.

Admiral Treslong, as we have seen, was refractory, the cause of great delinquency on the part of the fleets, and of infinite disaster to the commonwealth. More than all, the French negotiation was betraying the States into indolence and hesitation ; and creating a schism between the leading politicians of the country. Several thousand French troops, under Monsieur d'Allaynes, were daily expected, but never arrived ; and thus, while English and French partisans were plotting and counter-plotting, while a delusive diplomacy was usurping the place of lansquenettes and gun-boats—the only possible agents at that moment to preserve Antwerp—the bridge of Parma was slowly advancing. Before the winter had closed in, the preparatory palisades had been finished.

Between Kalloo and Ordam, upon the opposite side, a sand-bar had been discovered in the river's bed, which diminished the depth of the stream, and rendered the pile-driving comparatively easy. The breadth of the Scheldt at this passage was twenty-four hundred feet ; its depth, sixty feet. Upon the Flemish side, near Kalloo, a strong fort was erected, called Saint Mary, in honour of the blessed Virgin, to whom the whole siege of Antwerp had been dedicated from the beginning. On the opposite bank was a similar fort, named Philip, for the King. From each of these two points, thus fortified, a framework of heavy timber, supported upon huge piles, had been carried so far into the stream on either side that the distance between the ends had at last been reduced to thirteen hundred feet. The breadth of the roadway—formed of strong sleepers firmly bound together—was twelve feet, along which block-houses of great thickness were placed to defend the whole against assault.¹

Thus far the work had been comparatively easy. To bridge the remaining open portion of the river, however, where its current was deepest and strongest, and where the action of tide, tempest, and icebergs, would be most formidable, seemed a desperate undertaking ; for as the enterprise advanced, this

¹ Bor, II. 501, *seq.* Meteren, xii. 218, *seq.* Strada, II. 313, *seq.* Bentivoglio, P. II. L. III. 288, *seq.*

narrow open space became the scene of daily amphibious encounters between the soldiers and sailors of Parma and the forces of the States. Unfortunately for the patriots, it was only skirmishing. Had a strong, concerted attack, in large force, from Holland and Zeeland below and from the city above, been agreed upon, there was hardly a period, until very late in the winter, when it might not have had the best chances of success. With a vigorous commander against him, Parma, weak in men, and at his wits' end for money, might, in a few hours, have seen the labour of several months hopelessly annihilated. On the other hand, the Prince was ably seconded by his lieutenant, Marquis Richebourg, to whom had been delegated the immediate superintendence of the bridge-building in its minutest details. He was never idle. Audacious, indefatigable, ubiquitous, he at least atoned by energy and brilliant courage for his famous treason of the preceding year, while his striking and now rapidly approaching doom upon the very scene of his present labours, made him appear to have been building a magnificent though fleeting monument to his own memory.¹

Sainte Aldegonde, shut up in Antwerp, and hampered by dissension within and obstinate jealousy without the walls, did all in his power to frustrate the enemy's enterprise and animate the patriots. Through the whole of the autumn and early winter, he had urged the States of Holland and Zeeland to make use of the long winter nights, when moonless and stormy, to attempt the destruction of Parma's undertaking, but the fatal influences already indicated were more efficient against Antwerp than even the genius of Farnese; and nothing came of the burgomaster's entreaties save desultory skirmishing and unsuccessful enterprises. An especial misfortune happened in one of these midnight undertakings. Teligny ventured forth in a row-boat, with scarcely any companions, to notify the Zeelanders of a contemplated movement, in which their co-operation was desired. It was proposed that the Antwerp troops should make a fictitious demon-

¹ Bentivoglio, Strada, *ubi sup.*

station upon Fort Ordam, while at the same moment the States' troops from Fort Lillo should make an assault upon the forts on Kowenstyn Dyke; and in this important enterprise the Zeeland vessels were requested to assist. But the brave Teligny nearly forfeited his life by his rashness, and his services were, for a long time, lost to the cause of liberty. It had been better to send a less valuable officer upon such hazardous yet subordinate service. The drip of his oars was heard in the darkness. He was pursued by a number of armed barges, attacked, wounded severely in the shoulder, and captured. He threw his letters overboard, but they were fished out of the water, carried to Parma, and deciphered, so that the projected attack upon the Kowenstyn was discovered, and, of necessity, deferred. As for Teligny, he was taken, as a most valuable prize, into the enemy's camp, and was soon afterwards thrust into prison at Tournay, where he remained six years—one year longer than the period which his illustrious father had been obliged to consume in the infamous dungeon at Mons. Few disasters could have been more keenly felt by the States than the loss of this brilliant and devoted French chieftain, who, young as he was, had already become very dear to the republic; and Sainte Aldegonde was severely blamed for sending so eminent a personage on that dangerous expedition, and for sending him, too, with an insufficient convoy.¹

Still Alexander felt uncertain as to the result. He was determined to secure Antwerp, but he yet thought it possible to secure it by negotiation. The enigmatical policy maintained by France perplexed him; for it did not seem possible that so much apparent solemnity and earnestness were destined to lead to an impotent and infamous conclusion. He was left, too, for a long time in ignorance of his own master's secret schemes, he was at liberty to guess, and to guess only, as to the projects of the league, he was without adequate means to carry out to a certain triumph his magnificent enterprise, and he was in constant alarm lest he should be suddenly assailed by an overwhelming French force. Had a man sat upon the

¹ Bor, II. 507, 508. Meteren, xii. 218. Strada, II. 319, 320.

throne of Henry III. at that moment, Parma's bridge-making and dyke-fortifying—skilful as they were—would have been all in vain. Meantime, in uncertainty as to the great issue, but resolved to hold firmly to his purpose, he made repeated conciliatory offers to the States with one hand, while he steadily prosecuted his aggressive schemes with the other.

Parma had become really gentle, almost affectionate, towards the Netherlands. He had not the disposition of an Alva to smite and to blast, to exterminate the rebels and heretics with fire and sword, with the axe, the rack, and the gallows. Provided they would renounce the great object of the contest, he seemed really desirous that they should escape further chastisement; but to admit the worship of God according to the reformed creed, was with him an inconceivable idea. To do so was both unrighteous and impolitic. He had been brought up to believe that mankind could be saved from eternal perdition only by believing in the infallibility of the Bishop of Rome; that the only keys to eternal paradise were in the hands of St. Peter's representative. Moreover, he instinctively felt that within this religious liberty which the Netherlands claimed was hidden the germ of civil liberty; and though no bigger than a grain of mustard-seed, it was necessary to destroy it at once; for of course the idea of civil liberty could not enter the brain of the brilliant general of Philip II.

On the 13th of November he addressed a letter to the magistracy and broad-council of Antwerp. He asserted that the instigators of the rebellion were not seeking to 13th Nov., further the common weal, but their own private 1584. ends. Especially had this been the ruling motive with the Prince of Orange and the Duke of Anjou, both of whom God had removed from the world, in order to manifest to the States their own weakness, and the omnipotence of Philip, whose prosperity the Lord was constantly increasing. It was now more than time for the authorities of the country to have regard for themselves, and for the miseries of the poor people. The affection which he had always felt for the Provinces—

from which he had himself sprung—and the favours which he had received from them in his youth, had often moved him to propose measures, which, before God and his conscience, he believed adequate to the restoration of peace. But his letters had been concealed or falsely interpreted by the late Prince of Orange, who had sought nothing but to spread desolation over the land, and to shed the blood of the innocent. He now wrote once more, and for the last time, in all fervour and earnestness, to implore them to take compassion on their own wives and children and forlorn fatherland, to turn their eyes backward on the peace and prosperity which they had formerly enjoyed when obedient to his Majesty, and to cast a glance around them upon the miseries which were so universal since the rebellion. He exhorted them to close their ears to the insidious tongues of those who were leading them into delusion as to the benevolence and paternal sweetness of their natural lord and master, which were even now so boundless that he did not hesitate once more to offer them his entire forgiveness. If they chose to negotiate, they would find everything granted that with right and reason could be proposed. The Prince concluded by declaring that he made these advances not from any doubt as to the successful issue of the military operations in which he was engaged, but simply out of paternal anxiety for the happiness of the Provinces. Did they remain obstinate, their ultimate conditions would be rendered still more severe, and themselves, not he, would be responsible for the misery and the bloodshed to ensue.¹

Ten days afterwards, the magistrates, thus addressed—after communication with the broad-council—answered Parma's
23rd Nov., letter manfully, copiously, and with the customary
1584. but superfluous historical sketch. They begged leave to entertain a doubt as to the paternal sweetness of a king who had dealt so long in racks and gibbets. With Parma's own mother, as they told the Prince, the Netherlanders had once made a treaty, by which the right to wor-

¹ See the letters in *Meteren*, xii. 219, *Bor*, II. 502, 503. *Hoofl Vervolgh*, 60.

ship God according to their consciences had been secured ; yet for maintaining that treaty they had been devoted to indiscriminate destruction, and their land made desolate with fire and sword. Men had been massacred by thousands, who had never been heard in their own defence, and who had never been accused of any crime, "save that they had assembled together in the name of God, to pray to Him through their only mediator and advocate Jesus Christ, according to His command."¹

The axis of the revolt was the religious question ; and it was impossible to hope anything from a monarch who was himself a slave of the Inquisition, and who had less independence of action than that enjoyed by Jews and Turks, according to the express permission of the Pope. Therefore they informed Parma that they had done with Philip for ever, and that in consequence of the extraordinary wisdom, justice, and moderation, of the French King, they had offered him the sovereignty of their land, and had implored his protection.

They paid a tribute to the character of Farnese, who after gaining infinite glory in arms, had manifested so much gentleness and disposition to conciliate. They doubted not that he would, if he possessed the power, have guided the royal councils to better and more generous results, and protested that they would not have delayed to throw themselves into his arms, had they been assured that he was authorized to admit that which alone could form the basis of a successful negotiation—religious freedom. They would in such case have *been willing to close with him, without talking about other conditions* than such as his Highness in his discretion and sweetness might think reasonable.

Moreover, as they observed in conclusion, they were precluded, by their present relations with France, from entering into any other negotiation ; nor could they listen to any such proposals without deserving to be stigmatized as the most lewd, blasphemous, and thankless mortals, that ever cumbered the earth.

Being under equal obligations both to the Union and to France, they announced that Parma's overtures would be laid before the French government and the assembly of the States-General.¹

A day was to come, perhaps, when it would hardly seem lewdness and blasphemy for the Netherlanders to doubt the extraordinary justice and wisdom of the French King. Meantime, it cannot be denied that they were at least loyal to their own engagements, and long-suffering where they had trusted and given their hearts.

Parma replied by another letter, dated December 3rd. He assured the citizens that Henry III. was far too discreet, and
 10th Dec., much too good a friend to Philip II., to countenance
 1584. this rebellion. If he were to take up their quarrel, however, the King of Spain had a thousand means of foiling all his attempts. As to the religious question—which they affirmed to be the sole cause of the war—he was not inclined to waste words upon that subject ; nevertheless, so far as he in his simplicity could understand the true nature of a Christian, he could not believe that it comported with the doctrines of Jesus, whom they called their only mediator, nor with the dictates of conscience, to take up arms against their lawful king, nor to burn, rob, plunder, pierce dykes, overwhelm their fatherland, and reduce all things to misery and chaos, in the name of religion.²

Thus moralizing and dogmatizing, the Prince concluded his letter, and so the correspondence terminated. This last despatch was communicated at once both to the States-General and to the French government, and remained unanswered. Soon afterwards the Netherlands and England, France and Spain, were engaged in that vast game of delusion which has been described in the preceding chapters. Meantime both Antwerp and Parma remained among the deluded, and were left to fight out their battle on their own resources.

Having found it impossible to subdue Antwerp by his rhetoric, Alexander proceeded with his bridge. It is impossible

¹ Letters in Bor, Meteren, Hoofl, *ubi sup.*

² *Ibid.*

not to admire the steadiness and ingenuity with which the Prince persisted in his plans, the courage with which he bore up against the parsimony and neglect of his sovereign, the compassionate tenderness which he manifested for his patient little army. So much intellectual energy commands enthusiasm, while the supineness on the other side sometimes excites indignation. There is even a danger of being entrapped into sympathy with tyranny, when the cause of tyranny is maintained by genius; and of being surprised into indifference for human liberty, when the sacred interests of liberty are endangered by self-interest, perverseness, and folly.

Even Sainte Aldegonde did not believe that the bridge could be completed. His fears were that the city would be ruined rather by the cessation of its commerce than by want of daily food. Already, after the capture of Liefkenshoek and the death of Orange, the panic among commercial people had been so intense that seventy or eighty merchants, representing the most wealthy mercantile firms in Antwerp, made their escape from the place, as if it had been smitten with pestilence, or were already in the hands of Parma.¹ All such refugees were ordered to return on peril of forfeiting their property. Few came back, however, for they had found means of converting and transferring their funds to other more secure places, despite the threatened confiscation. It was insinuated that Holland and Zeeland were indifferent to the fate of Antwerp, because in the sequel the commercial cities of those Provinces succeeded to the vast traffic and the boundless wealth which had been forfeited by the Brabantine capital. The charge was an unjust one. At the very commencement of the siege the States of Holland voted two hundred thousand florins for its relief; and, moreover, these wealthy refugees were positively denied admittance into the territory of the United States, and were thus forced to settle in Germany or England.² This cessation of traffic was that which principally excited the anxiety of Aldegonde. He could not bring himself to believe in the possibility of a blockade, by an army of

¹ Baudartii 'Polemographia,' II. 24.

² Ibid.

eight or ten thousand men, of a great and wealthy city, where at least twenty thousand citizens were capable of bearing arms. Had he thoroughly understood the deprivations under which Alexander was labouring, perhaps he would have been even more confident as to the result.

"With regard to the affair of the river Scheldt," wrote Parma to Philip, "I should like to send your Majesty a
 15 Jan. drawing of the whole scheme; for the work is too
 1585. vast to be explained by letters. The more I examine it, the more astonished I am that it should have been conducted to this point; so many forts, dykes, canals, new inventions, machinery, and engines, have been necessarily required."¹

He then proceeded to enlighten the King—as he never failed to do in all his letters—as to his own impoverished, almost helpless condition. Money, money, men! This was his constant cry. All would be in vain, he said, if he were thus neglected. "Tis necessary," said he, "for your Majesty fully to comprehend, that henceforth the enterprise is your own. I have done my work faithfully thus far; it is now for your Majesty to take it thoroughly to heart; and embrace it with the warmth with which an affair involving so much of your own interests deserves to be embraced."²

He avowed that without full confidence in his sovereign's sympathy he would never have conceived the project. "I confess that the enterprise is great," he said, "and that by many it will be considered rash. Certainly I should not have undertaken it, had I not felt certain of your Majesty's full support."³

But he was already in danger of being forced to abandon the whole scheme—although so nearly carried into effect—for want of funds. "The million promised," he wrote, "has arrived in bits and morsels, and with so many ceremonies, that I haven't ten crowns at my disposal. How I am to maintain even this handful of soldiers—for the army is

¹ Prince of Parma to Philip II., 15 Jan. 1585. Archivo de Simancas MS.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

diminished to such a mere handful that it would astonish your Majesty—I am unable to imagine. It would move you to witness their condition. They have suffered as much as is humanly possible.”¹

Many of the troops, indeed, were deserting, and making their escape, beggared and desperate, into France, where, with natural injustice, they denounced their General, whose whole heart was occupied with their miseries, for the delinquency of his master, whose mind was full of other schemes.

“There past this way many Spanish soldiers,” wrote Stafford from Paris, “so poor and naked as I ever saw any. There have been within this fortnight two hundred at a time in this town, who report the extremity of want of victuals in their camp, and that they have been twenty-four months without pay. They exclaim greatly upon the Prince of Parma. Mendoza seeks to convey them away, and to get money for them by all means he can.”²

Stafford urged upon his government the propriety of being at least as negligent as Philip had showed himself to be of the Spaniards. By prohibiting supplies to the besieging army, England might contribute, negatively, if not otherwise, to the relief of Antwerp. “There is no place,” he wrote to Walsingham, “whence the Spaniards are so thoroughly victualled as from us. English boats go by sixteen and seventeen into Dunkirk, well laden with provisions.”

This was certainly not in accordance with the interests nor the benevolent professions of the English ministers.

These supplies were not to be regularly depended upon however. They were likewise not to be had without paying a heavy price for them, and the Prince had no money in his coffer. He lived from hand to mouth, and was obliged to borrow from every private individual who had anything to lend. Merchants, nobles, official personages, were all obliged to assist in eking out the scanty pittance allowed by the sovereign.

¹ Prince of Parma to Philip II., &c. MS. just cited.

² Stafford to Walsingham, ^{29 Dec. 1584,} in Murdin, II. 434.
8 Jan. 1585.

"The million is all gone," wrote Parma to his master; "some to Verdugo in Friesland; some to repay the advances of Marquis Richebourg and other gentlemen. There is not a farthing for the garrisons. I can't go on a month longer, and, if not supplied, I shall be obliged to abandon the work. I have not money enough to pay my sailors, joiners, carpenters, and other mechanics, from week to week, and they will all leave me in the lurch, if I leave them unpaid. I have no resource but to rely on your Majesty. Otherwise the enterprise must wholly fail."¹

In case it did fail, the Prince wiped his hands of the responsibility. He certainly had the right to do so.

One of the main sources of supply was the city of Hertogenbosch, or Bois-le-Duc. It was one of the four chief cities of Brabant, and still held for the King, although many towns in its immediate neighbourhood had espoused the cause of the republic. The States had long been anxious to effect a diversion for the relief of Antwerp, by making an attack on Bois-le-Duc. Could they carry the place, Parma would be almost inevitably compelled to abandon the siege in which he was at present engaged, and he could moreover spare no troops for its defence. Bois-le-Duc was a populous, wealthy, thriving town, situate on the Deeze, two leagues above its confluence with the Meuse, and about twelve leagues from Antwerp. It derived its name of 'Duke's Wood' from a magnificent park and forest, once the favourite resort and residence of the old Dukes of Brabant, of which some beautiful vestiges still remained. It was a handsome well-built city, with two thousand houses of the better class, besides more humble tenements. Its citizens were celebrated for their courage and belligerent skill, both on foot and on horseback. They were said to retain more of the antique Belgic ferocity which Cæsar had celebrated than that which had descended to most of their kinsmen. The place was, moreover, the seat of many prosperous manufactures. Its clothiers sent the products of their looms over

¹ MS. Letter of Parma, before cited.

all Christendom, and its linen and cutlery were equally renowned.¹

It would be a most fortunate blow in the cause of freedom to secure so thriving and conspicuous a town, situated thus in the heart of what seemed the natural territory of the United States ; and, by so doing, to render nugatory the mighty preparations of Parma against Antwerp. Moreover, it was known that there was no Spanish or other garrison within its walls, so that there was no opposition to be feared, except from the warlike nature of the citizens.

Count Hohenlo was entrusted, early in January, with this important enterprise. He accordingly collected a force of four thousand infantry, together with two hundred January, mounted lancers ; having previously reconnoitered 1585. the ground. He relied very much, for the success of the undertaking, on Captain Kleerhagen, a Brussels nobleman, whose wife was a native of Bois-le-Duc, and who was thoroughly familiar with the locality. One dark winter's night, Kleerhagen, with fifty picked soldiers, advanced to the Antwerp gate of Bois-le-Duc, while Hohenlo, with his whole force, lay in ambuscade as near as possible to the city.

Between the drawbridge and the portcullis were two small guard-houses, which, very carelessly, had been left empty. Kleerhagen, with his fifty followers, successfully climbed into these lurking-places, where they quietly ensconced themselves for the night. At eight o'clock of the following morning (20th January) the guards of the gate 20th Jan., drew up the portcullis, and reconnoitered. At the 1585. same instant, the ambushed fifty sprang from their concealment, put them to the sword, and made themselves masters of the gate. None of the night-watch escaped with life, save one poor old. invalided citizen, whose business had been to draw up the portcullis, and who was severely wounded, and left for dead. The fifty immediately summoned all of Hohenlo's ambuscade that were within hearing, and then, without waiting for them, entered the town pell-mell in the

¹ Guicciardini, *in voca.*

best of spirits, and shouting victory ! victory ! till they were hoarse. A single corporal, with two men, was left to guard the entrance. Meantime, the old wounded gate-opener, bleeding and crippled, crept into a dark corner, and laid himself down, unnoticed, to die.

Soon afterwards Hohenlo galloped into the town, clad in complete armour, his long curls floating in the wind, with about two hundred troopers clattering behind him, closely followed by five hundred pike-men on foot.

Very brutally, foolishly, and characteristically, he had promised his followers the sacking of the city so soon as it should be taken. They accordingly set about the sacking, before it was taken. Hardly had the five or six hundred effected their entrance, than throwing off all control, they dispersed through the principal streets, and began bursting open the doors of the most opulent households. The cries of "victory !" "gained city !" "down with the Spaniards !" resounded on all sides. Many of the citizens, panic-struck, fled from their homes, which they thus abandoned to pillage, while, meantime, the loud shouts of the assailants reached the ears of the sergeant and his two companies who had been left in charge of the gate. Fearing that they should be cheated of their rightful share in the plunder, they at once abandoned their post, and set forth after their comrades, as fast as their legs could carry them.

Now it so chanced—although there was no garrison in the town—that forty Burgundian and Italian lancers, with about thirty foot-soldiers, had come in the day before to escort a train of merchandise. The Seigneur de Haultepenne, governor of Breda, a famous royalist commander—son of old Count Berlaymont, who first gave the name of "beggars" to the patriots—had accompanied them in the expedition. The little troop were already about to mount their horses to depart, when they became aware of the sudden tumult. Elmont, governor of the city, had also flown to the rescue, and had endeavoured to rally the burghers. Not unmindful of their ancient warlike fame, they had obeyed his entreaties.

Elmont, with a strong party of armed citizens, joined himself to Haultepenne's little band of lancers. They fired a few shots at straggling parties of plunderers, and pursued others up some narrow streets. They were but an handful in comparison with the number of the patriots, who had gained entrance to the city. They were, however, compact, united, and resolute. The assailants were scattered, disorderly, and bent only upon plunder. When attacked by an armed and regular band, they were amazed. They had been told that there was no garrison; and behold a choice phalanx of Spanish lancers, led on by one of the most famous of Philip's Netherland chieftains. They thought themselves betrayed by Kleerhagen, entrapped into a deliberately arranged ambush. There was a panic. The soldiers, dispersed and doubtful, could not be rallied. Hohenlo, seeing that nothing was to be done with his five hundred, galloped furiously out of the gate, to bring in the rest of his troops who had remained outside the walls. The prize of the wealthy city of Bois-le-Duc was too tempting to be lightly abandoned; but he had much better have thought of making himself master of it himself before he should present it as a prey to his followers.

During his absence the panic spread. The States' troops, bewildered, astonished, vigorously assaulted, turned their backs upon their enemies, and fled helter-skelter towards the gates, through which they had first gained admittance. But unfortunately for them, so soon as the corporal had left his position, the wounded old gate-opener, in a dying condition, had crawled forth on his hands and knees from a dark hole in the tower, cut, with a pocket-knife, the ropes of the portcullis, and then given up the ghost. Most effective was that blow struck by a dead man's hand. Down came the portcullis. The flying plunderers were entrapped. Close behind them came the excited burghers—their antique Belgic ferocity now fully aroused—firing away with carbine and matchlock, dealing about them with bludgeon and cutlass, and led merrily on by Haultepenne and Elmont armed in

proof, at the head of their squadron of lancers. The unfortunate patriots had risen very early in the morning only to shear the wolf. Some were cut to pieces in the streets ; others climbed the walls, and threw themselves head foremost into the moat. Many were drowned, and but a very few effected their escape. Justinus de Nassau sprang over the parapet, and succeeded in swimming the ditch. Kleerhagen, driven into the Holy Cross tower, ascended to its roof, leaped, all accoutred as he was, into the river, and, with the assistance of a Scotch soldier, came safe to land. Ferdinand Truchsess, brother of the ex-electoral of Cologne, was killed. Four or five hundred of the assailants—nearly all who had entered the city—were slain, and about fifty of the burghers.

Hohenlo soon came back, with Colonel Ysselstein, and two thousand fresh troops. But their noses, says a contemporary, grew a hundred feet long with surprise when they saw the gate shut in their faces.¹ It might have occurred to the Count, when he rushed out of the town for reinforcements, that it would be as well to replace the guard, which—as he must have seen—had abandoned their post.

Cursing his folly, he returned, mavelously discomfited, and deservedly censured, to Gertruydenberg. And thus had a most important enterprise, which had nearly been splendidly successful, ended in disaster and disgrace. To the recklessness of the general, to the cupidity which he had himself awakened in his followers, was the failure alone to be attributed. Had he taken possession of the city with a firm grasp at the head of his four thousand men, nothing could have resisted him ; Haultepenne, and his insignificant force, would have been dead, or his prisoners ; the basis of Parma's magnificent operations would have been withdrawn ; Antwerp would have been saved.²

¹ Le Petit II. 506.

² For the enterprise against Bois-le-Duc, see Le Petit, ii. 505-506 ; Baudartil Polemog. ii. 39 ; Meteren, xii. 222 ; Strada, ii. 326, 327 (who by a singular lapse of the pen represents Justinus de Nassau as having been

killed, "Reperi inter eos, qui desiderati sunt, Ferd. Truchsessius, et *notatus Oranii filius*," &c. 327 ;) Bor. ii. 558 ; Van Wyn op Wagenaar, viii. 34, seq. ; Letter of Parma to the King, 12 Feb. 1585. (Archivo de Simancas MS.)

"Infinite gratitude," wrote Parma to Philip, "should be rendered to the Lord. Great thanks are also due to Haultepenne. *Had the rebels succeeded in their enterprise against Bolduc, I should have been compelled to abandon the siege of Antwerp.* The town, by its strength and situation, is of infinite importance for the reduction both of that place and of Brussels, and the rebels in possession of Bolduc would have cut off my supplies."¹

The Prince recommended Haultepenne most warmly to the King as deserving of a rich "merced." The true hero of the day, however—at least the chief agent in the victory—was the poor, crushed, nameless victim who had cut the ropes of the portcullis at the Antwerp gate.

Hohenlo was deeply stung by the disgrace which he had incurred. For a time he sought oblivion in hard drinking; but—brave and energetic, though reckless—he soon became desirous of retrieving his reputation by more successful enterprises. There was no lack of work, and assuredly his hands were rarely idle.

"Hollach (Hohenlo) is gone from hence on Friday last," wrote Davison to Walsingham, "he will do what he may to recover his reputation lost in the attempt of Bois-le-Duc; which, for the grief and trouble he hath conceived thereof, hath for the time greatly altered him."²

Meantime the turbulent Scheldt, lashed by the storms of winter, was becoming a more formidable enemy to Parma's great enterprise than the military demonstrations of his enemies, or the famine which was making such havoc with his little army. The ocean-tides were rolling huge ice-blocks up and down, which beat against his palisade with the noise of thunder, and seemed to threaten its immediate destruction. But the work stood firm. The piles supporting the piers, which had been thrust out from each bank into the stream, had been driven fifty feet into the river's bed, and did their duty well. But in the space between, twelve hundred and

¹ MS. Letter of Parma just cited.

² Davison to Walsingham, Feb. 12, 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

forty feet in width, the current was too deep for pile-driving, and a permanent bridge was to be established upon boats. And that bridge was to be laid across the icy and tempestuous flood, in the depth of winter, in the teeth of a watchful enemy, with the probability of an immediate invasion from France, —where the rebel envoys were known to be negotiating on express invitation of the King—by half-naked, half-starving soldiers and sailors, unpaid for years, and for the sake of a master who seemed to have forgotten their existence.

“Thank God,” wrote Alexander, “the palisade stands firm in spite of the ice. Now with the favour of the Lord, we shall soon get the fruit we have been hoping, if your Majesty is not wanting in that to which your grandeur, your great Christianity, your own interests, oblige you. In truth ’tis a great and heroic work, worthy the great power of your Majesty.” “For my own part,” he continued, “I have done what depended upon me. From your own royal hand must emanate the rest ;—men, namely, sufficient to maintain the posts, and money enough to support them there.”¹

He expressed himself in the strongest language concerning the danger to the royal cause from the weak and gradually sinking condition of the army. Even without the French intrigues with the rebels, concerning which, in his ignorance of the exact state of affairs, he expressed much anxiety, it would be impossible, he said, to save the royal cause without men and money.

“I have spared myself,” said the Prince, “neither day nor night. Let not your Majesty impute the blame to me if we fail. Verdugo also is uttering a perpetual cry out of Friesland for men—men and money.”

Yet, notwithstanding all these obstacles, the bridge was
25 Feb. finished at last. On the 25th February, the day
1585. sacred to Saint Matthew, and of fortunate augury to the Emperor Charles, father of Philip and grandfather of Alexander, the Scheldt was closed.²

¹ MS. Letter of Parma before cited.

² Ibid.

³ Parma to Philip, 27 Feb. 1585. (Archivo de Simancas MS.)

As already stated, from Fort Saint Mary on the Kalloo side, and from Fort Philip, not far from Ordam on the Brabant shore of the Scheldt, strong structures, supported upon piers, had been projected, reaching, respectively, five hundred feet into the stream. These two opposite ends were now connected by a permanent bridge of boats. There were thirty-two of these barges, each of them sixty-two feet in length and twelve in breadth, the spaces between each couple being twenty-two feet wide, and all being bound together, stem, stern, and midships, by quadruple hawsers and chains. Each boat was anchored at stem and stern with loose cables. Strong timbers, with cross rafters, were placed upon the boats, upon which heavy frame-work the planked pathway was laid down. A thick parapet of closely-fitting beams was erected along both the outer edges of the whole fabric. Thus a continuous and well-fortified bridge, two thousand four hundred feet in length, was stretched at last from shore to shore. Each of the thirty-two boats on which the central portion of the structure reposed, was a small fortress provided with two heavy pieces of artillery, pointing, the one up, the other down the stream, and manned by thirty-two soldiers and four sailors, defended by a breastwork formed of gabions of great thickness.

The forts of Saint Philip and St. Mary, at either end of the bridge, had each ten great guns, and both were filled with soldiers. In front of each fort, moreover, was stationed a fleet of twenty armed vessels, carrying heavy pieces of artillery; ten anchored at the angle towards Antwerp, and as many looking down the river. One hundred and seventy great guns, including the armaments of the boats under the bridge of the armada and the forts, protected the whole structure, pointing up and down the stream.

But, besides these batteries, an additional precaution had been taken. On each side, above and below the bridge, at a moderate distance—a bow shot—was anchored a heavy raft floating upon empty barrels. Each raft was composed of heavy timbers, bound together in bunches of three, the

spaces between being connected by ships' masts and lighter spar-work, and with a tooth-like projection along the whole outer edge, formed of strong rafters, pointed and armed with sharp prongs and hooks of iron. Thus a serried phalanx, as it were, of spears stood ever on guard to protect the precious inner structure. Vessels coming from Zeeland or Antwerp, and the floating ice-masses, which were almost as formidable, were obliged to make their first attack upon these dangerous outer defences. Each raft, floating in the middle of the stream, extended twelve hundred and fifty-two feet across, thus protecting the whole of the bridge of boats and a portion of that resting upon piles.¹

Such was the famous bridge of Parma. The magnificent undertaking has been advantageously compared with the celebrated Rhine-bridge of Julius Cæsar. When it is remembered, however, that the Roman work was performed in summer, across a river only half as broad as the Scheldt, free from the disturbing action of the tides, and flowing through an unresisting country; while the whole character of the structure, intended only to serve for the single passage of an army, was far inferior to the massive solidity of Parma's bridge; it seems not unreasonable to assign the superiority to the general who had surmounted all the obstacles of a northern winter, vehement ebb and flow from the sea, and enterprising and desperate enemies at every point.

When the citizens, at last, looked upon the completed fabric, converted from the "dream," which they had pronounced it to be, into a terrible reality; when they saw the shining array of Spanish and Italian legions marching and counter-marching upon their new road, and trampling, as it were, the turbulent river beneath their feet; when they witnessed the solemn military spectacle with which the Governor-General celebrated his success, amid peals of cannon and shouts of triumph from his army, they bitterly

¹ MS. Letter of Parma before cited. Compare Strada, ii. 312 *seq.*; Bentivoglio, P. ii. and L. iii. 988-990; Meteren, xii. 218 *seq.*; Bor. ii. L. xx. 590 *seq.*

(with admirable plans, etchings and maps); Baudartii Polemog. ii. 22, *seq.* (with very good engravings.)

bewailed their own folly. Yet even then they could hardly believe that the work had been accomplished by human agency, but they loudly protested that invisible demons had been summoned to plan and perfect this fatal and preter-human work. They were wrong. There had been but one demon—one clear, lofty intelligence, inspiring a steady and untiring hand. The demon was the intellect of Alexander Farnese; but it had been assisted in its labour by the hundred devils of envy, covetousness, jealousy, selfishness, distrust, and discord, that had housed, not in his camp, but in the ranks of those who were contending for their hearths and altars.

And thus had the Prince arrived at success in spite of every obstacle. He took a just pride in the achievement, yet he knew by how many dangers he was still surrounded, and he felt hurt at his sovereign's neglect. "The enterprise at Antwerp," he wrote to Philip on the day the bridge was completed, "is so great and heroic that to celebrate it would require me to speak more at large than I like to do, for fear of being tedious to your Majesty. What I will say, is that the labours and difficulties have been every day so great, that if your Majesty knew them, you would estimate what we have done more highly than you do; *and not forget us so utterly, leaving us to die of hunger.*"¹

He considered the fabric in itself almost impregnable, provided he were furnished with the means to maintain what he had so painfully constructed.

"The whole is in such condition," said he, "that in opinion of all competent military judges it would stand though all Holland and Zeeland should come to destroy our palisades. Their attacks must be made at immense danger and disadvantage, so severely can we play upon them with our artillery and musketry. Every boat is garnished with the most dainty captains and soldiers, so that if the enemy should attempt to assail us now, they would come back with broken heads."²

¹ "Y no nos tenia tan olvidados, ni permitiria dexarnos en tanta necesidad que no habemos de morir de hambre," &c. (MS. Letter of Parma to Philip,

27 Feb. 1585.)

² Parma to Philip II., 28 Feb. 1585 (Archivo de Simancas MS.)

Yet in the midst of his apparent triumph he had, at times, almost despair in his heart. He felt really at the last gasp. His troops had dwindled to the mere shadow of an army, and they were forced to live almost upon air. The cavalry had nearly vanished. The garrisons in the different cities were starving. The burghers had no food for the soldiers nor for themselves. "As for the rest of the troops," said Alexander, "they are stationed where they have nothing to subsist upon, save salt water and the dykes, and if the Lord does not grant a miracle, succour, even if sent by your Majesty, will arrive too late."¹ He assured his master, that he could not go on more than five or six days longer, that he had been feeding his soldiers for a long time from hand to mouth, and that it would soon be impossible for him to keep his troops together. If he did not disband them they would run away.²

His pictures were most dismal, his supplications for money very moving, but he never alluded to himself. All his anxiety, all his tenderness, were for his soldiers. "They must have food," he said. "'Tis impossible to sustain them any longer by driblets, as I have done for a long time. Yet how can I do it without money? And I have none at all, nor do I see where to get a single florin."

But these revelations were made only to his master's most secret ear. His letters, deciphered after three centuries, alone make manifest the almost desperate condition in which the apparently triumphant general was placed, and the facility with which his antagonists, had they been well guided and faithful to themselves, might have driven him into the sea.

But to those adversaries he maintained an attitude of serene and smiling triumph. A spy, sent from the city to obtain intelligence for the anxious burghers, had gained admission into his lines, was captured and brought before the Prince. He expected, of course, to be immediately hanged. On the contrary, Alexander gave orders that he should be conducted over every part of the encampment. The forts, the palisades,

¹ Same to same, 27 Feb. 1585. (Archivo de Simancas MS.)

² Ibid

the bridge, were all to be carefully exhibited and explained to him as if he had been a friendly visitor entitled to every information. He was requested to count the pieces of artillery in the forts, on the bridge, in the armada. After thoroughly studying the scene he was then dismissed with a safe-conduct to the city.

"Go back to those who sent you," said the Prince. "Convey to them the information in quest of which you came. Apprise them of every thing which you have inspected, counted, heard explained. Tell them further, that the siege will never be abandoned, and that this bridge will be my sepulchre or my pathway into Antwerp."¹

And now the aspect of the scene was indeed portentous. The chimera had become a very visible bristling reality. There stood the bridge which the citizens had ridiculed while it was growing before their faces. There scowled the Kowenstyn—black with cannon, covered all over with fortresses—which the butchers had so sedulously preserved. From Parma's camp at Beveren and Kalloo a great fortified road led across the river and along the fatal dyke all the way to the entrenchments at Stabroek, where Mansfeld's army lay. Grim Mondragon held the "holy cross" and the whole Kowenstyn in his own iron grasp. A chain of forts, built and occupied by the contending hosts of the patriots and the Spaniards, were closely packed together along both banks of the Scheldt, nine miles long from Antwerp to Lillo, and interchanged perpetual cannonades. The country all around, once fertile as a garden, had been changed into a wild and wintry sea, where swarms of gun-boats and other armed vessels manœuvred and contended with each other over submerged villages and orchards, and among half-drowned turrets and steeples. Yet there rose the great bulwark—whose early destruction would have made all this desolation a blessing—unbroken and obstinate; a perpetual obstacle to communication between Antwerp and Zeeland. The very spirit of the murdered Prince of Orange seemed to rise sadly and reproach-

¹ Strada, ii. 325. 326.

fully out of the waste of waters, as if to rebuke the men who had been so deaf to his solemn warnings.

Brussels, too, wearied and worn, its heart sick with hope deferred, now fell into despair as the futile result of the French negotiation became apparent. The stately and opulent city had long been in a most abject condition. Many of its inhabitants attempted to escape from the horrors of starving by flying from its walls. Of the fugitives, the men were either scourged back by the Spaniards into the city, or hanged up along the road-side. The women were treated leniently, even playfully, for it was thought an excellent jest to cut off the petticoats of the unfortunate starving creatures up to their knees, and then command them to go back and starve at home with their friends and fellow-citizens. A great many persons literally died of hunger. Matrons with large families poisoned their children and themselves to avoid the more terrible death by starving.¹ At last, when Vilvoorde was taken, when the baseness of the French King was
 13 March, thoroughly understood, when Parma's bridge was
 1585. completed and the Scheldt bridled, Brussels capitulated on as favourable terms as could well have been expected.²

Notwithstanding these triumphs, Parma was much inconvenienced by not possessing the sea-coast of Flanders. Ostend was a perpetual stumbling-block to him. He therefore assented, with pleasure to a proposition made by La Motte, one of the most experienced and courageous of the Walloon royalist commanders, to attempt the place by surprise. And La Motte, at the first blow, was more than half successful.

29 March On the night of the 29th March, with two thousand
 1585. foot and twelve hundred cavalry, he carried the whole of the old port of Ostend. Leaving a Walloon officer, in whom he had confidence, to guard the position already

¹ Strada, ii. 329, 330.

² Ibid.; Meteren, xii. 22^{re}; Le Petit, ii. 511. The burghers were allowed two years, during which they were to decide between the Papacy and per-

petual exile. The municipal liberties were to depend upon the pleasure of the King. The houses of Cardinal Granville and of Count Mansfeld were to be rebuilt and refurnished.

gained, he went back in person for reinforcements. During his advance, the same ill luck attended his enterprise which had blasted Hohenlo's achievement at Bois-le-Duc. The soldiers he left behind him deserted their posts for the sake of rifling the town. The officer in command, instead of keeping them to their duty, joined in the chase. The citizens roused themselves, attacked their invaders, killed many of them, and put the rest to flight. When La Motte returned, he found the panic general. His whole force, including the fresh soldiers just brought to the rescue, were beside themselves with fear. He killed several with his own hand, but the troops were not to be rallied. His quick triumph was changed into an absolute defeat.

Parma, furious at the ignominious result of a plan from which so much had been expected, ordered the Walloon captain, from whose delinquency so much disaster had resulted, to be forthwith hanged. "Such villainy," said he, "must never go unpunished."¹

It was impossible for the Prince to send a second expedition to attempt the reduction of Ostend, for the patriots were at last arousing themselves to the necessity of exertion. It was very obvious—now that the bridge had been built, and the Kowenstyn fortified—that one or the other was to be destroyed, or Antwerp abandoned to its fate.

The patriots had been sleeping, as it were, all the winter, hugging the delusive dream of French sovereignty and French assistance. No language can exaggerate the deadly effects from the slow poison of that negotiation. At any rate, the negotiation was now concluded. The dream was dispelled. Antwerp must now fall, or a decisive blow must be struck by the patriots themselves, and a telling blow had been secretly and maturely meditated. Certain preparatory steps were however necessary.

¹ Parma to Philip II., 10 Apr., 1585. (Archivo de Simancas MS.) Compare Strada, ii. 332, who says that three of the officers were condemned to be executed, but that all were subsequently

pardoned on account of the previous good conduct of one of them. Alexander in his letter informs the King that he had ordered one to be executed forthwith, as an example to the others.

The fort of Liefkenshoek, "darling's corner," was a most important post. The patriots had never ceased to regret that precious possession, lost, as we have seen, in so tragical a manner on the very day of Orange's death. Fort Lillo, exactly opposite, on the Brabant shore of the Scheldt, had always been securely held by them, and was their strongest position. Were both places in their power, the navigation of the river, at least as far as the bridge, would be comparatively secure.

A sudden dash was made upon Liefkenshoek. A number of armed vessels sailed up from Zeeland, under command of Justinus de Nassau. They were assisted from Fort Lillo by a detachment headed by Count Hohenlo. These two officers were desirous of retrieving the reputation which they had lost at Bois-le-Duc. They were successful, and the "darling" fort was carried at a blow. After a brief cannonade, the patriots made a breach, effected a landing, and sprang over the ramparts. The Walloons and Spaniards fled in dismay; many of them were killed in the fort, and along the dykes; others were hurled into the Scheldt. The victors followed up their success by reducing, with equal impetuosity, the fort of Saint Anthony, situate in the neighbourhood farther down the river. They thus gained entire command of all the high ground, which remained in that quarter above the inundation, and was called the Doel.¹

The dyke, on which Liefkenshoek stood, led up the river towards Kalloo, distant less than a league. There were Parma's head-quarters and the famous bridge. But at Fort Saint Mary, where the Flemish head of that bridge rested, the dyke was broken. Upon that broken end the commanders of the expedition against Liefkenshoek were ordered to throw up an entrenchment, without loss of a moment, so soon as they should have gained the fortresses which they were ordered first to assault. Sainte Aldegonde had given urgent written directions to this effect. From a redoubt situated thus, in the very face of Saint Mary's, that position, the

¹ Le Petit, ii. 511; Strada, ii. 383.

palisade-work, the whole bridge, might be battered with all the artillery that could be brought from Zeeland.

But Parma was beforehand with them. Notwithstanding his rage and mortification that Spanish soldiers should have ignominiously lost the important fortress which Richebourg had conquered so brilliantly nine months before, he was not the man to spend time in unavailing regrets. His quick eye instantly detected the flaw which might soon be fatal. In the very same night of the loss of Liefkenshoek, he sent as strong a party as could be spared, with plenty of sappers and miners, in flat-bottomed boats across from Kalloo. As the morning dawned, an improvised fortress, with the Spanish flag waving above its bulwarks, stood on the broken end of the dyke. That done, he ordered one of the two captains who had commanded in Liefkenshoek and Saint Anthony to be beheaded on the same dyke. The other was dismissed with ignominy.¹ Ostend was, of course, given up; "but it was not a small matter," said Parma, "to fortify ourselves that very night upon the ruptured place, and so prevent the rebels from doing it, which would have been very *mal-à-propos*."

Nevertheless, the rebels had achieved a considerable success; and now or never the telling blow, long meditated, was to be struck.

There lived in Antwerp a subtle Mantuan, Gianibelli by name, who had married and been long settled in the city. He had made himself busy with various schemes for victualing the place. He had especially urged upon the authorities, at an early period of the siege, the propriety of making large purchases of corn and storing it in magazines at a time when the famine-price had by no means been reached.² But the leading men had then their heads full of a great ship, or floating castle, which they were building, and which they

¹ Strada, ii. 333. Bor, ii. 596, and Bentivoglio, P. ii. L. iii. p. 291, say that both the commandants were beheaded. The Prince himself (MS. Letter to Philip, 10 April, 1585) re-

lates the loss of the forts, but says nothing of the punishment inflicted upon the culprits.

² MS. Letter of Parma, just cited.

³ Bor, ii. 500.

had pompously named the 'War's End,' 'Fin de la Guerra.' We shall hear something of this phenomenon at a later period. Meanwhile, Gianibelli, who knew something of shipbuilding, as he did of most other useful matters, ridiculed the design, which was likely to cost, in itself before completion, as much money as would keep the city in bread for a third of a year.

Gianibelli was no patriot. He was purely a man of science and of great acquirements, who was looked upon by the ignorant populace alternately as a dreamer and a wizard. He was as indifferent to the cause of freedom as of despotism, but he had a great love for chemistry. He was also a profound mechanician, second to no man of his age in theoretic and practical engineering.

He had gone from Italy to Spain that he might offer his services to Philip, and give him the benefit of many original and ingenious inventions. Forced to dance attendance, day after day, among sneering courtiers and insolent placemen, and to submit to the criticism of practical sages and philosophers of routine, while he was constantly denied an opportunity of explaining his projects, the quick-tempered Italian had gone away at last, indignant. He had then vowed revenge upon the dulness by which his genius had been slighted, and had sworn that the next time the Spaniards heard the name of the man whom they had dared to deride, they should hear it with tears.¹

He now laid before the senate of Antwerp a plan for some vessels likely to prove more effective than the gigantic 'War's End,' which he had prophesied would prove a failure. With these he pledged himself to destroy the bridge. He demanded three ships which he had selected from the city fleet—the 'Orange,' the 'Post,' and the 'Golden Lion,'—measuring, respectively, one hundred and fifty, three hundred and fifty, and five hundred tons. Besides these, he wished sixty flat-bottomed scows, which he proposed to send down the river, partially submerged, disposed in the shape of a half moon, with innumerable anchors and grapnels thrusting

¹ Strada, ii. 334, 335.

themselves out of the water at every point. This machine was intended to operate against the raft.

Ignorance and incredulity did their work, as usual, and Gianibelli's request was refused. As a quarter-measure, nevertheless, he was allowed to take two smaller vessels of seventy and eighty tons. The Italian was disgusted with this parsimony upon so momentous an occasion, but he at the same time determined, even with these slender materials, to give an exhibition of his power.¹

Not all his the glory, however, of the ingenious project. Associated with him were two skilful artizans of Antwerp; a clockmaker named Bory, and a mechanician named Timmerman;² but Gianibelli was the chief and superintendent of the whole daring enterprise.

He gave to his two ships the cheerful names of the 'Fortune' and the 'Hope,' and set himself energetically to justify their titles by their efficiency. They were to be floating marine volcanos, which, drifting down the river with the ebb tide, were to deal destruction where the Spaniards deemed themselves most secure.

In the hold of each vessel, along the whole length, was laid down a solid flooring of brick and mortar, one foot thick, and five feet wide. Upon this was built a chamber of marble mason-work, forty feet long, three and a half feet broad, as many high, and with side-walks five feet in thickness. This was the crater. It was filled with seven thousand pounds of gunpowder, of a kind superior to anything known, and prepared by Gianibelli himself. It was covered with a roof, six feet in thickness, formed of blue tombstones, placed edgewise. Over this crater, rose a hollow cone, or pyramid, made of heavy marble slabs, and filled with mill-stones,

¹ Bor, ii. 596, 597; Hoofd Vervolgh, 91.

² Bor, ii. 596, 597; Hoofd Vervolgh, 91; Strada, ii. 344 seq.; Meteren, xii. 223^{ro}; Baudartii Polemog. ii. 24-27, with very curious illustrative plates; Bentivoglio, P. ii. L. iii. 291, 292; Heyd, iv. 60. (Letter of Parma to

Philip, 10 April, 1585. Arch. de Sim. MB.

³ Hondius, 'Korte Beschryving ende 'Afbeclding van de generale Regelen der Fortificatie.' 'SGravenhage, 1624, fol. cited in Mertens and Toris' Gesch. v. Antwerpen, v. 223 seq.

cannon balls, blocks of marble, chain-shot, iron hooks, plough-coulters, and every dangerous missile that could be imagined. The spaces between the mine and the sides of each ship were likewise filled with paving stones, iron-bound stakes, harpoons, and other projectiles. The whole fabric was then covered by a smooth light flooring of planks and brick-work, upon which was a pile of wood. This was to be lighted at the proper time, in order that the two vessels might present the appearance of simple fire-ships, intended only to excite a conflagration of the bridge. On the 'Fortune' a slow match, very carefully prepared, communicated with the submerged mine, which was to explode at a nicely-calculated moment. The eruption of the other floating volcano was to be regulated by an ingenious piece of clock-work, by which, at the appointed time, fire, struck from a flint, was to inflame the hidden mass of gunpowder below.

In addition to these two infernal machines, or "holl-burners," as they were called, a fleet of thirty-two smaller vessels was prepared. Covered with tar, turpentine, rosin, and filled with inflammable and combustible materials, these barks were to be sent from Antwerp down the river in detachments of eight every half hour with the ebb tide. The object was to clear the way, if possible, of the raft, and to occupy the attention of the Spaniards, until the 'Fortune' and the 'Hope' should come down upon the bridge.

The 5th April, being the day following that on which the
5 April, successful assault upon Liefkenshoek and Saint
1585. Anthony had taken place, was fixed for the descent of the fire-ships. So soon as it should be dark, the thirty-two lesser burning-vessels, under the direction of Admiral Jacob Jacobzoon, were to be sent forth from the neighborhood of the 'Boor's Sconce'—a fort close to the city walls—in accordance with the Italian's plan. "Run-a-way Jacob," however, or "Koppen Loppen," had earned no new laurels which could throw into the shade that opprobrious appellation. He was not one of Holland's naval heroes, but, on the whole, a very incompetent officer; exactly the man to damage the

best concerted scheme which the genius of others could invent. Accordingly, Koppen-Loppen began with a grave mistake. Instead of allowing the precursory fire-ships to drift down the stream, at the regular intervals agreed upon, he despatched them all rapidly, and helter skelter, one after another, as fast as they could be set forth on their career. Not long afterwards, he sent the two "hell-burners," the 'Fortune' and the 'Hope,' directly in their wake. Thus the whole fiery fleet had set forth, almost at once, upon its fatal voyage.

It was known to Parma that preparations for an attack were making at Antwerp, but as to the nature of the danger he was necessarily in the dark. He was anticipating an invasion by a fleet from the city in combination with a squadron of Zeelanders coming up from below. So soon as the first vessels, therefore, with their trains not yet lighted, were discovered bearing down from the city, he was confirmed in his conjecture. His drums and trumpets instantly called to arms, and the whole body of his troops was mustered upon the bridge, the palisades, and in the nearest forts. Thus the preparations to avoid or to contend with the danger, were leading the Spaniards into the very jaws of destruction. Alexander, after crossing and recrossing the river, giving minute directions for repelling the expected assault, finally stationed himself in the block-house at the point of junction, on the Flemish side, between the palisade and the bridge of boats. He was surrounded by a group of superior officers, among whom Richebourg, Billy, Gaetano, Cessis, and the Englishman Sir Rowland Yorke, were conspicuous.

It was a dark, mild evening of early spring. As the fleet of vessels dropped slowly down the river, they suddenly became luminous, each ship flaming out of the darkness, a phantom of living fire. The very waves of the Scheldt seemed glowing with the conflagration, while its banks were lighted up with a preternatural glare. It was a wild, pompous, theatrical spectacle. The array of soldiers on both sides the river, along the dykes and upon the bridge, with banners

waving, and spear and cuirass glancing in the lurid light ; the demon fleet, guided by no human hand, wrapped in flames, and flitting through the darkness, with irregular movement, but portentous aspect, at the caprice of wind and tide ; the death-like silence of expectation, which had succeeded the sound of trumpet and the shouts of the soldiers ; and the weird glow which had supplanted the darkness—all combined with the sense of imminent and mysterious danger to excite and oppress the imagination.

Presently, the Spaniards, as they gazed from the bridge, began to take heart again. One after another, many of the lesser vessels drifted blindly against the raft, where they entangled themselves among the hooks and gigantic spear-heads, and burned slowly out without causing any extensive conflagration. Others grounded on the banks of the river, before reaching their destination. Some sank in the stream.

Last of all came the two infernal ships, swaying unsteadily with the current ; the pilots of course, as they neared the bridge, having noiselessly effected their escape in the skiffs. The slight fire upon the deck scarcely illuminated the dark phantom-like hulls. Both were carried by the current clear of the raft, which, by a great error of judgment, as it now appeared, on the part of the builders, had only been made to protect the floating portion of the bridge. The 'Fortune' came first, staggering inside the raft, and then lurching clumsily against the dyke, and grounding near Kalloo, without touching the bridge. There was a moment's pause of expectation. At last the slow match upon the deck burned out, and there was a faint and partial explosion, by which little or no damage was produced.

Parma instantly called for volunteers to board the mysterious vessel. The desperate expedition was headed by the bold Roland York,¹ a Londoner, of whom one day there was more to be heard in Netherland history. The party sprang into the deserted and now harmless volcano, extinguishing the slight fires that were smouldering on the deck,

¹ Stowe. 'Chronicle of England,' ed. 1631, p. 700.

and thrusting spears and long poles into the hidden recesses of the hold. There was, however, little time to pursue these perilous investigations, and the party soon made their escape to the bridge.

The troops of Parma, crowding on the palisade, and looking over the parapets, now began to greet the exhibition with peals of derisive laughter. It was but child's play, they thought, to threaten a Spanish army, and a general like Alexander Farnese, with such paltry fire-works as these. Nevertheless all eyes were anxiously fixed upon the remaining fire-ship, or "hell-burner," the 'Hope,' which had now drifted very near the place of its destination. Tearing her way between the raft and the shore, she struck heavily against the bridge on the Kalloo side, close to the block-house at the commencement of the floating portion of the bridge. A thin wreath of smoke was seen curling over a slight and smouldering fire upon her deck.

Marquis Richebourg, standing on the bridge, laughed loudly at the apparently impotent conclusion of the whole adventure. It was his last laugh on earth. A number of soldiers, at Parma's summons, instantly sprang on board this second mysterious vessel, and occupied themselves, as the party on board the 'Fortune' had done, in extinguishing the flames, and in endeavoring to ascertain the nature of the machine. Richebourg boldly directed from the bridge their hazardous experiments.

At the same moment a certain ensign De Vega, who stood near the Prince of Parma, close to the block-house, approached him with vehement entreaties that he should retire. Alexander refused to stir from the spot, being anxious to learn the result of these investigations. Vega, moved by some instinctive and irresistible apprehension, fell upon his knees, and plucking the General earnestly by the cloak, implored him with such passionate words and gestures to leave the place, that the Prince reluctantly yielded.

It was not a moment too soon. The clock-work in the 'Hope' had been better adjusted than the slow match in the

'Fortune.' Scarcely had Alexander reached the entrance of Saint Mary's Fort, at the end of the bridge, when a horrible explosion was heard. The 'Hope' disappeared, together with the men who had boarded her, and the block-house, against which she had struck, with all its garrison, while a large portion of the bridge, with all the troops stationed upon it, had vanished into air. It was the work of a single instant. The Scheldt yawned to its lowest depth, and then cast its waters across the dykes, deep into the forts, and far over the land. The earth shook as with the throb of a volcano. A wild glare lighted up the scene for one moment, and was then succeeded by pitchy darkness. Houses were toppled down miles away, and not a living thing, even in remote places, could keep its feet. The air was filled with a rain of plough-shares, grave-stones, and marble balls, intermixed with the heads, limbs, and bodies, of what had been human beings. Slabs of granite, vomited by the flaming ship, were found afterwards at a league's distance, and buried deep in the earth. A thousand soldiers were destroyed in a second of time; many of them being torn to shreds, beyond even the semblance of humanity.

Richebourg disappeared, and was not found until several days later, when his body was discovered, doubled around an iron chain, which hung from one of the bridge-boats in the centre of the river. The veteran Robles, Seigneur de Billy, a Portuguese officer of eminent service and high military rank, was also destroyed. Months afterwards, his body was discovered adhering to the timber-work of the bridge, upon the ultimate removal of that structure, and was only recognized by a peculiar gold chain which he habitually wore. Parma himself was thrown to the ground, stunned by a blow on the shoulder from a flying stake. The page, who was behind him, carrying his helmet, fell dead without a wound, killed by the concussion of the air.

Several strange and less tragical incidents occurred. The Viscomte de Bruxelles was blown out of a boat on the Flemish side, and descended safe and sound into another in the centre

of the stream. Captain Tucci, clad in complete armour, was whirled out of a fort, shot perpendicularly into the air, and and then fell back into the river. Being of a cool temperament, a good swimmer, and very pious, he skilfully divested himself of cuirass and helmet, recommended himself to the Blessed Virgin, and swam safely ashore. Another young officer of Parma's body-guard, François de Liege by name, standing on the Kalloo end of the bridge, rose like a feather into the clouds, and, flying quite across the river, alighted on the opposite bank with no further harm than a contused shoulder. He imagined himself (he said afterwards), to have been changed into a cannon-ball, as he rushed through the pitchy atmosphere, propelled by a blast of irresistible fury.¹

It had been agreed that Admiral Jacobzoon should, immediately after the explosion of the fire-ships, send an eight-oared barge to ascertain the amount of damage. If a breach had been effected, and a passage up to the city opened, he was to fire a rocket. At this signal, the fleet stationed at Lillo, carrying a heavy armament, laden with provisions enough to relieve Antwerp from all anxiety, and ready to sail on the instant, was at once to force its way up the river.

The deed was done. A breach, two hundred feet in width, was made. Had the most skilful pilot in Zeeland held the helm of the 'Hope,' with a choice crew obedient to his orders, he could not have guided her more carefully than she had been directed by wind and tide. Avoiding the raft which lay in her way, she had, as it were, with the intelligence of a living creature, fulfilled the wishes of the daring genius that had created her; and laid herself alongside the bridge,

¹ The chief authorities used in the foregoing account of this famous enterprise are those already cited on a previous page, viz.: the MS. Letters of the Prince of Parma in the Archives of Simancas; Bor, ii. 596, 597; Strada, ii. 334 *seq.*; Meteren, xii. 223^v; Hooft Vervolg, 91; Baudartii Polemographia, ii. 24-27; Bentivoglio, P. ii. L. iii. 291; 292; Reyd, iv. 60; Mar-

tens and Torfs Gesch. v. Antw. v. 223 *seq.*; Papebrochi Ann. Antv. iv. 100 *seq.* et al.—I have not thought it necessary to cite them step by step; for all the accounts, with some inevitable and unimportant discrepancies, agree with each other. The most copious details are to be found in Strada and in Bor.

exactly at the most telling point. She had then destroyed herself, precisely at the right moment. All the effects, and more than all, that had been predicted by the Mantuan wizard had come to pass. The famous bridge was cleft through and through, and a thousand picked men—Parma's very "daintiest"—were blown out of existence. The Governor-General himself was lying stark and stiff upon the bridge which he said should be his triumphal monument or his tomb. His most distinguished officers were dead, and all the survivors were dumb and blind with astonishment at the unheard-of convulsion. The passage was open for the fleet, and the fleet lay below with sails spread, and oars in the rowlocks, only waiting for the signal to bear up at once to the scene of action, to smite out of existence all that remained of the splendid structure, and to carry relief and triumph into Antwerp.

Not a soul slept in the city. The explosion had shook its walls, and thousands of people thronged the streets, their hearts beating high with expectation. It was a moment of exquisite triumph. The 'Hope,' word of happy augury, had not been relied upon in vain, and Parma's seven months of patient labour had been annihilated in a moment. Sainte Aldegonde and Gianibelli stood in the 'Boors' Sconce' on the edge of the river. They had felt and heard the explosion, and they were now straining their eyes through the darkness to mark the flight of the welcome rocket.

That rocket never rose. And it is enough, even after the lapse of three centuries, to cause a pang in every heart that beats for human liberty to think of the bitter disappointment which crushed these great and legitimate hopes. The cause lay in the incompetency and cowardice of the man who had been so unfortunately entrusted with a share in a noble enterprise.

Admiral Jacobzoon, paralyzed by the explosion, which announced his own triumph, sent off the barge, but did not wait for its return. The boatmen, too, appalled by the sights and sounds which they had witnessed, and by the murky

darkness which encompassed them, did not venture near the scene of action, but, after rowing for a short interval hither and thither, came back with the lying report that nothing had been accomplished, and that the bridge remained unbroken. Sainte Aldegonde and Gianibelli were beside themselves with rage, as they surmised the imbecility of the Admiral, and devoted him in their hearts to the gallows, which he certainly deserved. The wrath of the keen Italian may be conceived, now that his ingenious and entirely successful scheme was thus rendered fruitless by the blunders of the incompetent Fleming.¹

On the other side, there was a man whom no danger could appal. Alexander had been thought dead, and the dismay among his followers was universal. He was known to have been standing an instant before the explosion on the very block-house where the 'Hope' had struck. After the first terrible moments had passed, his soldiers found their general lying, as if in a trance, on the threshold of St. Mary's Fort, his drawn sword in his hand, with Cessis embracing his knees, and Gaetano extended at his side, stunned with a blow upon the head.²

Recovering from his swoon, Parma was the first to spring to his feet. Sword in hand, he rushed at once upon the bridge to mark the extent of the disaster. The admirable structure, the result of so much patient and intelligent energy, was fearfully shattered; the bridge, the river, and the shore, strewn with the mangled bodies of his soldiers. He expected, as a matter of certainty, that the fleet from below would instantly force its passage, destroy the remainder of his troops—stunned as they were with the sudden catastrophe—complete the demolition of the bridge, and then make its way to Antwerp, with ample reinforcements and supplies. And

¹ Bor, Hoofl, Meteren, *ubi supra*.

² Such is the picture minutely painted by Strada, *l.* 342; and, although the Prince, in his own letters, written from the scene of action, and preserved in the Simancas Archives, omits the incident, yet I am inclined to rely

upon the very ample materials possessed by the genial Jesuit, in the shape of private contemporary letters from Spanish officers engaged in the war—letters, alas, which have probably for ever disappeared.

Alexander saw that the expedition would be successful. Momently expecting the attack, he maintained his courage and semblance of cheerfulness, with despair in his heart.

His winter's work seemed annihilated, and it was probable that he should be obliged to raise the siege. Nevertheless, he passed in person from rank to rank, from post to post, seeing that the wounded were provided for, encouraging those that remained unhurt, and endeavouring to infuse a portion of his own courage into the survivors of his panic-stricken army.

Nor was he entirely unsuccessful, as the night wore on and the expected assault was still delayed. Without further loss of time, he employed his men to collect the drifting boats, timber, and spar-work, and to make a hasty and temporary restoration—in semblance at least—of the ruined portion of his bridge. And thus he employed himself steadily all the night, although expecting every instant to hear the first broadside of the Zeeland cannon. When morning broke, and it became obvious that the patriots were unable or unwilling to follow up their own success, the Governor-General felt as secure as ever. He at once set about the thorough repairs of his great work, and—before he could be again molested—had made good the damage which it had sustained.¹

It was not till three days afterwards that the truth was known in Antwerp. Hohenlo then sent down a messenger, who swam under the bridge, ascertained the exact state of affairs, and returned, when it was too late, with the first intelligence of the triumph which had been won and lost. The disappointment and mortification were almost intolerable. And thus had Run-a-way Jacob, 'Koppen Loppen,' blasted the hopes of so many wiser and braver spirits than his own.

The loss to Parma and to the royalist cause in Marquis Richebourg, was very great. The death of De Billy, who was a faithful, experienced, and courageous general, was also much lamented. "The misfortune from their death," said

¹ Bor, Strada, Meteren, Hoofd, Ben-
tuglio, Reyd, Mertens and Torps,

Papebrochii Ann. (MS. Letters of
Parma, *ubi supra*.

Parma, "is not to be exaggerated. Each was ever ready to do his duty in your Majesty's service, and to save me much fatigue in all my various affairs. Nevertheless," continued the Prince, with great piety, "we give the Lord thanks for all, and take as a favour everything which comes from His hand."¹

Alexander had indeed reason to deplore the loss of Robert de Melun, Viscount of Ghent, Marquis of Roubaix and Richebourg. He was a most valuable officer. His wealth was great. It had been recently largely increased by the confiscation of his elder brother's estates for his benefit, a measure which at Parma's intercession had been accorded by the King. That brother was the patriotic Prince of Espinoy, whom we have recently seen heading the legation of the States to France. And Richebourg was grateful to Alexander, for besides these fraternal spoils, he had received two marquisates through his great patron, in addition to the highest military offices. Insolent, overbearing, truculent to all the world, to Parma he was ever docile, affectionate, watchful, obsequious. A man who knew not fatigue, nor fear, nor remorse, nor natural affection, who could patiently superintend all the details of a great military work, or manage a vast political intrigue by alternations of brow-beating and bribery, or lead a forlorn hope, or murder a prisoner in cold blood, or leap into the blazing crater of what seemed a marine volcano, the Marquis of Richebourg had ever made himself most actively and unscrupulously useful to his master. Especially had he rendered invaluable services in the reduction of the Walloon Provinces, and in the bridging of the Scheldt, the two crowning triumphs of Alexander's life. He had now passed from the scene where he had played so energetic and dazzling a part, and lay doubled round an iron cable beneath the current of the restless river.

And in this eventful night, Parma, as always, had been true to himself and to his sovereign. "We expected," said he, "that the rebels would instantly attack us on all sides

after the explosion. But all remained so astonished by the unheard-of accident, that very few understood what was going on. It seemed better that I—notwithstanding the risk of letting myself be seen—should encourage the people not to run away. I did so, and remedied matters a little but not so much as that—if the enemy had then attacked us—we *should not have been in the very greatest risk and peril*. I did not fail to do what I am obliged to do, and always hope to do ; but I say no more of what passed, or what was done by myself, because it does not become me to speak of these things.”¹

Notwithstanding this discomfiture, the patriots kept up heart, and were incessantly making demonstrations against Parma's works. Their proceedings against the bridge, although energetic enough to keep the Spanish commander in a state of perpetual anxiety, were never so efficient however as on the memorable occasion when the Mantuan engineer and the Dutch watchmaker had exhausted all their ingenuity. Nevertheless, the rebel barks swarmed all over the submerged territory, now threatening this post, and now that, and effecting their retreat at pleasure ; for nearly the whole of Parma's little armada was stationed at the two extremities of his bridge. Many fire-ships were sent down from time to time, but Alexander had organized a systematic patrol of a few sentry-boats, armed with scythes and hooks, which rowed up and down in front of the rafts, and protected them against invasion.

Some little effect was occasionally produced, but there was on the whole more anxiety excited than damage actually inflicted. The perturbation of spirit among the Spaniards when any of these ‘demon fire-ships,’ as they called them, appeared bearing down upon their bridge, was excessive. It could not be forgotten, that the ‘Hope’ had sent into space a thousand of the best soldiers of the little army within one moment of time. Such rapid proceedings had naturally left

¹ “ — y no dijo mas aqui de lo | estarme bien tratar dello.” (MS. letter
que entonces paso, y yo hice por no | before cited.)

an uneasy impression on the minds of the survivors. The fatigue of watching was enormous. Hardly an officer or soldier among the besieging forces knew what it was to sleep. There was a perpetual exchanging of signals and beacon-fires and rockets among the patriots—not a day or night, when a concerted attack by the Antwerpens from above, and the Hollanders from below, with gun-boats and fire-ships, and floating mines, and other devil's enginry, was not expected.

"We are always upon the alert," wrote Parma, "with arms in our hands. Every one must mount guard, myself as well as the rest, almost every night, and the better part of every day."¹

He was quite aware that something was ever in preparation; and the nameless, almost sickening apprehension which existed among his stout-hearted veterans, was a proof that the Mantuan's genius—notwithstanding the disappointment as to the great result—had not been exercised entirely in vain. The image of the Antwerp devil-ships imprinted itself indelibly upon the Spanish mind, as of something preternatural, with which human valour could only contend at a disadvantage; and a day was not very far distant—one of the memorable days of the world's history, big with the fate of England, Spain, Holland, and all Christendom—when the sight of a half-dozen blazing vessels, and the cry of "the Antwerp fire-ships," was to decide the issue of a most momentous enterprise. The blow struck by the obscure Italian against Antwerp bridge, although ineffective then, was to be most sensibly felt after a few years had passed, upon a wider field.

Meantime the uneasiness and the watchfulness in the besieging army were very exhausting. "They are never idle in the city," wrote Parma. "They are perpetually proving their obstinacy and pertinacity by their industrious genius and the machines which they devise. Every day we are expecting some new invention. On our side we endeavour to counteract their efforts by *every human means* in our power.

¹ Parma to Philip, 6 May, 1585. (Archivo de Simancas MS.)

Nevertheless, I confess that our merely *human intellect* is not competent to penetrate the designs of *their diabolical genius*. Certainly, most wonderful and extraordinary things have been exhibited, such as the oldest soldiers here have never before witnessed.”¹

Moreover, Alexander saw himself growing weaker and weaker. His force had dwindled to a mere phantom of an army. His soldiers, ill-fed, half-clothed, unpaid, were fearfully overworked. He was obliged to concentrate all the troops at his disposal around Antwerp. Diversions against Ostend, operations in Friesland and Gelderland, although most desirable, had thus been rendered quite impossible.

“I have recalled my cavalry and infantry from Ostend,” he wrote, “and Don Juan de Manrique has fortunately arrived in Stabroek with a thousand good German folk. The commissary-general of the cavalry has come in, too, with a good lot of the troops that had been encamped in the open country. Nevertheless, we remain wretchedly weak—quite insufficient to attempt what ought to be done. If the enemy were more in force, or if the French wished to make trouble, your Majesty would see how important it had been to provide in time against such contingencies. And although our neighbours, crestfallen, and rushing upon their own destruction, leave us in quiet, we are not without plenty of work. It would be of inestimable advantage to make diversions in Gelderland and Friesland, because, in that case, the Hollanders, seeing the enemy so near their own borders, would be obliged to withdraw their assistance from Antwerp. ’Tis pity to see how few Spaniards your Majesty has left, and how diminished is our army. Now, also, is the time to expect sickness, and this affair of Antwerp is obviously stretching out into large proportions. Unless soon reinforced, we must inevitably go to destruction. I implore your Majesty to ponder the matter well, and not to defer the remedy.”²

¹ “— aunque confieso que nuestros ingenios no alcanzan ni penetran lo que los suyos diabolicos hazen, porque cierto se veen cosas estrañas y nuevas a lo que aseguran cuantos sol-

dados viejos aqui hay.” (Parma to Philip, 25 May, 1585. Arch. de Sim. MS.)

² MS. Letter, 10 April, 1585, before cited.

His Majesty was sure to ponder the matter well, if that had been all. Philip was good at pondering; but it was equally certain that the remedy would be deferred. Meantime Alexander and his starving but heroic little army were left to fight their battles as they could.

His complaints were incessant, most reasonable, but unavailing. With all the forces he could muster, by withdrawing from the neighbourhood of Ghent, Brussels, Vilvoorde, and from all the garrisons, every man that could be spared, he had not strength enough to guard his own posts. To attempt to win back the important forts recently captured by the rebels on the Doel, was quite out of the question. The pictures he painted of his army were indeed most dismal. The Spaniards were so reduced by sickness that it was pitiful to see them. The Italians were not in much better condition, nor the Germans. "As for the Walloons," said he, "they are deserting, as they always do. In truth, one of my principal dangers is that the French civil wars are now tempting my soldiers across the frontier; the country there is so much richer, and offers so much more for the plundering."¹

During the few weeks which immediately followed the famous descent of the 'Hope' and the 'Fortune,' there had accordingly been made a variety of less elaborate, but apparently mischievous, efforts against the bridge. On the whole, however, the object was rather to deceive and amuse the royalists, by keeping their attention fixed in that quarter, while a great attack was, in reality, preparing against the Kowenstyn. That strong barrier, as repeatedly stated, was even a more formidable obstacle than the bridge to the communication between the beleagured city and their allies upon the outside. Its capture and demolition, even at this late period, would open the navigation to all the fleets of Zeeland.

In the undertaking of the 5th of April all had been accomplished that human ingenuity could devise; yet the triumph had been snatched away even at the very moment when it was complete. A determined and vigorous effort was soon to

¹ MS. Letter, Parma to Philip, 6 May, 1585.

be made upon the Kowenstyn, in the very face of Parma ; for it now seemed obvious that the true crisis was to come upon that fatal dyke. The great bulwark was three miles long. It reached from Stabroek in Brabant, near which village Mansfeld's troops were encamped, across the inundated country, up to the line of the Scheldt. Thence, along the river-dyke, and across the bridge to Kalloo and Beveren, where Parma's forces lay, was a continuous fortified road some three leagues in length ; so that the two divisions of the besieging army, lying four leagues apart, were all connected by this important line.

Could the Kowenstyn be pierced, the water, now divided by that great bulwark into two vast lakes, would flow together in one continuous sea. Moreover the Scheldt, it was thought, would, in that case, return to its own channel through Brabant, deserting its present bed, and thus leaving the famous bridge high and dry. A wide sheet of navigable water would then roll between Antwerp and the Zeeland coasts, and Parma's bridge, the result of seven months' labour, would become as useless as a child's broken toy.

Alexander had thoroughly comprehended the necessity of maintaining the Kowenstyn. All that it was possible to do with the meagre forces at his disposal, he had done. He had fringed both its margins, along its whole length, with a breastwork of closely-driven stakes. He had strengthened the whole body of the dyke with timber-work and piles. Upon its river-end, just at the junction with the great Scheldt dyke, a strong fortress, called the Holy Cross, had been constructed, which was under the special command of Mondragon.¹ Besides this, three other forts had been built, at intervals of about a mile, upon the dyke. The one nearest to Mondragon was placed at the Kowenstyn manor-house, and was called Saint James. This was entrusted to Camillo Bourbon del Monte, an Italian officer, who boasted the blood royal of France in his veins, and was disposed on all occasions to vindicate that proud pedigree by his deeds.² The next fort

¹ Strada, II. 345, 346.

² De Thou, viii. 428.

was Saint George's, sometimes called the Black Sconce. It had been built by La Motte, but it was now in command of the Spanish officer, Benites. The third was entitled the Fort of the Palisades, because it had been necessary to support it by a stockade-work in the water, there being absolutely not earth enough to hold the structure. It was placed in the charge of Captain Gamboa. These little castles had been created, as it were, out of water and upon water, and under a hot fire from the enemy's forts and fleets, which gave the pioneers no repose.¹

"'Twas very hard work," said Parma, "our soldiers are so exposed during their labour, the rebels playing upon them perpetually from their musket-proof vessels. They fill the submerged land with their boats, skimming everywhere as they like, while we have none at all. We have been obliged to build these three forts with neither material nor space; making land enough for the foundation by bringing thither bundles of hurdles and of earth. The fatigue and anxiety are incredible. Not a man can sleep at night; not an officer nor soldier but is perpetually mounting guard. But they are animated to their hard work by seeing that I share in it, like one of themselves. We have now got the dyke into good order, so far as to be able to give them a warm reception, whenever they choose to come."²

Quite at the farther or land end of the Kowenstyn, was another fort, called the Stabroek, which commanded and raked the whole dyke, and was in the neighbourhood of Mansfeld's head-quarters.

Placed as were these little citadels upon a slender, and—at a brief distance—invisible thread of land, with the dark waters rolling around them far and near, they presented an unsubstantial dream-like aspect, seeming rather like castles floating between air and ocean than actual fortifications—a deceptive mirage rather than reality. There was nothing imaginary, however, in the work which they were to perform.

¹ Strada, II. 345, 346. Bor. II. 597, | ² Parma to Philip, 6 May, 1585
598. | Archivo de Simancas MS.

A series of attacks, some serious, others fictitious, had been made, from time to time, upon both bridge and dyke; but ^{7th May,} Alexander was unable to inspire his soldiers with ^{1585.} his own watchfulness. Upon the 7th of May a more determined attempt was made upon the Kowenstyn, by the fleet from Lillo. Hohenlo and Colonel Ysselstein conducted the enterprise. The sentinels at the point selected—having recently been so often threatened by an enemy, who most frequently made a rapid retreat, as to have grown weary and indifferent—were surprised, at dawn of day, and put to the sword. “If the truth must be told,” said Parma, “the sentries were sound asleep.” Five hundred Zeelanders, with a strong party of sappers and miners, fairly established themselves upon the dyke, between St. George’s and Fort Palisade. The attack, although spirited at its commencement, was doomed to be unsuccessful. A co-operation, agreed upon by the fleet from Antwerp, failed through a misunderstanding. Sainte Aldegonde had stationed certain members of the munition-chamber in the cathedral tower, with orders to discharge three rockets, when they should perceive a beacon-fire which he should light in Fort Tholouse. The watchmen mistook an accidental camp-fire in the neighbourhood for the preconcerted signal, and sent up the rockets. Hohenlo understanding, accordingly, that the expedition was on the point of starting from Antwerp, hastened to perform his portion of the work, and sailed up from Lillo. He did his duty faithfully and well, and established himself upon the dyke, but found himself alone and without sufficient force to maintain his position. The Antwerp fleet never sailed. It was even whispered that the delinquency was rather intended than accidental; the Antwerpens being supposed desirous to ascertain the result of Hohenlo’s attempt before coming forth to share his fate. Such was the opinion expressed by Farnese in his letters to Philip, but it seems probable that he was mistaken. Whatever the cause, however, the fact of the Zeelanders’ discomfiture was certain. The St. George battery

¹ In Strada, II. 349.

and that of the Palisade were opened at once upon them, the balls came plunging among the sappers and miners before they had time to throw up many spade-fulls of earth, and the whole party were soon dead or driven from the dyke. The survivors effected their retreat as they best could, leaving four of their ships behind them and three or four hundred men.

"Forty rebels lay dead on the dyke," said Parma, "and one hundred and fifty more, at least, were drowned. The enemy confess a much larger loss than the number I state, but I am not a friend of giving details larger than my ascertained facts; nor do I know how many were killed in the boats."¹

This enterprise was but a prelude, however, to the great undertaking which had now been thoroughly matured. Upon the 26th May, another and most determined attack ^{26th May,} was to be made upon the Kowenstyn, by the ^{1585.} Antwerpens and Hollanders acting in concert. This time, it was to be hoped, there would be no misconception of signals. "It was a determination," said Parma, "so daring and desperate that there was no substantial reason why we should believe they would carry it out; but they were at last solemnly resolved to die or to effect their purpose."²

Two hundred ships in all had been got ready, part of them under Hohenlo and Justinus de Nassau, to sail up from Zeeland; the others to advance from Antwerp under Sainte Aldegonde. Their destination was the Kowenstyn Dyke. Some of the vessels were laden with provisions, others with gabions, hurdles, branches, sacks of sand and of wool, and with other materials for the rapid throwing up of fortifications.

It was two o'clock, half an hour before the chill dawn of a May morning, Sunday, the 26th of the month. The pale light of a waning moon was faintly perceptible in the sky. Suddenly the sentinels upon the Kowenstyn—this time not

¹ Parma to Philip II., 25 May, 1585, 'Arch. de Sim. MS.' Compare Bor, II. 598, 599. Strada, 348, 349. Le Petit, II. 512. Meteren, xii. 224. Ben-

tivoglio, p. 11, l. iii. 294.

² Parma to Philip II., 26 May, 1585. 'Arch. de Sim. MS.'

asleep—descried, as they looked towards Lillo, four fiery apparitions gliding towards them across the waves. The alarm was given, and soon afterwards the Spaniards began to muster, somewhat reluctantly, upon the dyke, filled as they always were with the mysterious dread which those demon-vessels never failed to inspire.

The fire-ships floated slowly nearer, and at last struck heavily against the stockade-work. There, covered with tar, pitch, rosin, and gunpowder, they flamed, flared, and exploded, during a brief period, with much vigour, and then burned harmlessly out. One of the objects for which they had been sent—to set fire to the palisade—was not accomplished. The other was gained; for the enemy, expecting another volcanic shower of tombstones and plough-coulters, and remembering the recent fate of their comrades on the bridge, had retired shuddering into the forts. Meantime, in the glare of these vast torches, a great swarm of gunboats and other vessels, skimming across the leaden-coloured waters, was seen gradually approaching the dyke. It was the fleet of Hohenlo and Justinus de Nassau, who had been sailing and rowing since ten o'clock of the preceding night. The burning ships lighted them on their way, while it had scared the Spaniards from their posts.

The boats ran ashore in the mile-long space between forts St. George and the Palisade, and a party of Zeelanders, Admiral Haultain, governor of Walcheren, at their head, sprang upon the dyke. Meantime, however, the royalists, finding that the fire-ships had come to so innocent an end, had rallied and emerged from their forts. Haultain and his Zeelanders, by the time they had fairly mounted the dyke, found themselves in the iron embrace of several hundred Spaniards. After a brief fierce struggle, face to face, and at push of pike, the patriots reeled backward down the bank, and took refuge in their boats. Admiral Haultain slipped as he left the shore, missed a rope's end which was thrown to him, fell into the water, and, borne down by the weight of his armour, was drowned. The enemy, pursuing them, sprang to the waist in

the ooze on the edge of the dyke, and continued the contest. The boats opened a hot fire, and there was a severe skirmish for many minutes, with no certain result. It was, however, beginning to go hard with the Zeelanders, when, just at the critical moment, a cheer from the other side of the dyke was heard, and the Antwerp fleet was seen coming swiftly to the rescue. The Spaniards, taken between the two bands of assailants, were at a disadvantage, and it was impossible to prevent the landing of these fresh antagonists. The Antwerpers sprang ashore. Among the foremost was Sainte Aldegonde,¹—poet, orator, hymn-book maker, burgomaster, lawyer, polemical divine—now armed to the teeth and cheering on his men, in the very thickest of the fight. The diversion was successful, and Sainte Aldegonde gallantly drove the Spaniards quite off the field. The whole combined force from Antwerp and Zeeland now effected their landing. Three thousand men occupied all the space between Fort George and the Palisade.

With Sainte Aldegonde came the unlucky Koppen Loppen, and all that could be spared of the English and Scotch troops in Antwerp, under Balfour and Morgan. With Hohenlo and Justinus de Nassau came Reinier Kant, who had just succeeded Paul Buys as Advocate of Holland. Besides these came two other men, side by side, perhaps in the same boat, of whom the world was like to hear much, from that time forward, and whose names are to be most solemnly linked together, so long as Netherland history shall endure; one, a fair-faced flaxen-haired boy of eighteen, the other a square-visaged, heavy-browed man of forty—Prince Maurice² and John of Olden-Barneveldt. The statesman had

¹ "Monsr. Ste. Aldegonde being one of the first." Letter of Capt.

Thomas James to Walsingham, ¹⁶₂₈ May, 1588, S. P. Office MS. The English soldier had no remarkable talent for description, but he had been fighting all day on the dyke, and sent off a rough account of the business, the same night, to England.

² "The Count Maurice, with divers

of the States, was here," says Capt. James, in the letter above cited.

There is a doubt as to Olden-Barneveldt's presence. My authority, in stating the fact, rested on a contemporaneous MS., but the note has unluckily been lost. The common biographers of the great advocate, and the contemporary historians, are silent as to the fact, if it be one. It is certain, however, that many members of

been foremost to urge the claim of William the Silent's son upon the stadholderate of Holland and Zeeland, and had been, as it were, the youth's political guardian. He had himself borne arms more than once before, having shouldered his matchlock under Batenburg, and marched on that officer's spirited but disastrous expedition for the relief of Haarlem. But this was the life of those Dutch rebels. Quill-driving, law-expounding, speech-making, diplomatic missions, were intermingled with very practical business in besieged towns or open fields, with Italian musketeers and Spanish pikemen. And here, too, young Maurice was taking his first solid lesson in the art of which he was one day to be so distinguished a professor. It was a sharp beginning. Upon this ribband of earth, scarce six paces in breadth, with miles of deep water on both sides—a position recently fortified by the first general of the age, and held by the famous infantry of Spain and Italy—there was likely to be no prentice-work.

To assault such a position was in truth, as Alexander had declared it to be, a most daring and desperate resolution on the part of the States. "Soldiers, citizens, and all," said Parma, "they are obstinate as dogs to try their fortune."¹

With wool-sacks, sand-bags, hurdles, planks, and other materials brought with them, the patriots now rapidly entrenched themselves in the position so brilliantly gained; while, without deferring for an instant the great purpose which they had come to effect, the sappers and miners fastened upon the iron-bound soil of the dyke, tearing it with pick, mattock, and shovel, digging, delving, and throwing up the earth around them, busy as human beavers, instinctively engaged in a most congenial task.

But the beavers did not toil unmolested. The large and determined force of Antwerpers and English, Hollanders and Zeelanders, guarded the fortifications as they were rapidly rising, and the pioneers as they were so manfully delving;

the States-General came up in Hohenlo's fleet, and it was not likely that Barneveldt would stay behind. His presence is distinctly stated by some

one, but the reader is at liberty to be incredulous if he choose.

¹ Parma to Philip II. 6 June, 1585, 'Arch. de Sim. MS.'

but the enemy was not idle. From Fort Saint James, next beyond Saint George, Camillo del Monte led a strong party to the rescue. There was a tremendous action, foot to foot, breast to breast, with pike and pistol, sword and dagger. Never since the beginning of the war had there been harder fighting than now upon that narrow isthmus. "Twas an affair of most brave obstinacy on both sides," said Parma, who rarely used strong language. "Soldiers, citizens, and all—they were like mad bulldogs."¹ Hollanders, Italians, Scotchmen, Spaniards, Englishmen, fell thick and fast. The contest was about the entrenchments before they were completed, and especially around the sappers and miners, in whose picks and shovels lay the whole fate of Antwerp. Many of the dyke-breakers were digging their own graves, and rolled, one after another, into the breach which they were so obstinately creating. Upon that slender thread of land the hopes of many thousands were hanging. To tear it asunder, to roll the ocean-waves up to Antwerp, and thus to snatch the great city triumphantly from the grasp of Philip—to accomplish this, the three thousand had come forth that May morning. To prevent it, to hold firmly that great treasure entrusted to them, was the determination of the Spaniards. And so, closely pent and packed, discharging their carbines into each other's faces, rolling, coiled together, down the slimy sides of the dyke into the black waters, struggling to and fro, while the cannon from the rebel fleet and from the royal forts mingled their roar with the sharp crack of the musketry, Catholics and patriots contended for an hour, while still, through all the confusion and uproar, the miners dug and delved.

At last the patriots were victorious. They made good their entrenchments, drove the Spaniards, after much slaughter, back to the fort of Saint George on the one side, and of the Palisade on the other, and cleared the whole space between the two points. The centre of the dyke was theirs; the great Kowenstyn, the only key by which the gates of Antwerp

¹ Same to same, 26 May, 1585, MS.

could be unlocked, was in the deliverers' hands. They pursued their victory, and attacked the Palisade Fort. Gamboa, its commandant, was severely wounded; many other officers dead or dying; the outworks were in the hands of the Hollanders; the slender piles on which the fortress rested in the water were rudely shaken; the victory was almost complete.

And now there was a tremendous cheer of triumph. The beavers had done their work, the barrier was bitten through and through, the salt water rushed like a river through the ruptured dyke. A few moments later, and a Zeeland barge, freighted with provisions, floated triumphantly into the waters beyond, now no longer an inland sea. The deed was done—the victory achieved. Nothing more was necessary than to secure it, to tear the fatal barrier to fragments, to bury it, for its whole length, beneath the waves. Then, after the isthmus had been utterly submerged, when the Scheldt was rolled back into its ancient bed, when Parma's famous bridge had become useless, when the maritime communication between Antwerp and Holland had been thoroughly established, the Spaniards would have nothing left for it but to drown like rats in their entrenchments or to abandon the siege in despair. All this was in the hands of the patriots. The Kowenstyn was theirs. The Spaniards were driven from the field, the batteries of their forts silenced. For a long period the rebels were unmolested, and felt themselves secure.¹

"We remained thus some three hours," says Captain James, an English officer who fought in the action, and described it in rough, soldierly fashion to Walsingham the same day, "thinking all things to be secure."² Yet in the very supreme moment of victory, the leaders, both of the Hollanders and of the Antwerpers, proved themselves incompetent to their

¹ Meteren, xii. 224. Bor, II. 599, 600. Hoofd Vervolg, 97-99, *seq.* Bentivoglio, P. II. L. III. 297, *seq.* Strada, II. 354-367. Baudartii, 'Polemographia,' II. 27-30. Le Petit, II. 514. Capt. T. James to Walsingham, ¹⁶/₂₆ May, 1585, S. P. Office MS. Gulpin

to Walsingham, ¹⁷/₂₇ May, 1585, S. P. Office MS. Parma to Philip II., 26 May and 6 June, 1585, 'Archivo de Simancas MS.'

² MS. Letter before cited.

position. With deep regret it must be admitted, that not only the reckless Hohenlo, but the all-accomplished Sainte Aldegonde, committed the gravest error. In the hour of danger, both had comported themselves with perfect courage and conduct. In the instant of triumph, they gave way to puerile exultation. With a celerity as censurable as it seems incredible, both these commanders sprang into the first barge which had thus floated across the dyke, in order that they might, in person, carry the news of the victory to Antwerp, and set all the bells ringing and the bonfires blazing. They took with them Ferrante Spinola, a mortally-wounded Italian officer of rank, as a trophy of their battle, and a boat-load of beef and flour, as an earnest of the approaching relief.¹

While the conquerors were thus gone to enjoy their triumph, the conquered, though perplexed and silenced, were not yet disposed to accept their defeat. They were even ignorant that they were conquered. They had been forced to abandon the field, and the patriots had entrenched themselves upon the dyke, but neither Fort Saint George nor the Palisade had been carried, although the latter was in imminent danger.

Old Count Peter Ernest Mansfeld—a grizzled veteran, who had passed his childhood, youth, manhood, and old age, under fire—commanded at the land-end of the dyke, in the fortress of Stabroek, in which neighbourhood his whole division was stationed. Seeing how the day was going, he called a council of war. The patriots had gained a large section of the dyke. So much was certain. Could they succeed in utterly demolishing that bulwark in the course of the day? If so, how were they to be dislodged before their work was perfected? It was difficult to assault their position. Three thousand Hollanders, Antwerpers, Englishmen—"mad bulldogs all," as Parma called them—showing their teeth very mischievously, with one hundred and sixty Zeeland vessels throwing in their broadsides from both margins of the dyke, were a formidable company to face.

"Oh for one half hour of Alexander in the field!" sighed

¹ Meteren, Bor Hoofd, Strada, *ubi sup.*

one of the Spanish officers in council. But Alexander was more than four leagues away, and it was doubtful whether he even knew of the fatal occurrence. Yet how to send him a messenger. Who could reach him through that valley of death? Would it not be better to wait till nightfall? Under the cover of darkness something might be attempted, which in the daylight would be hopeless. There was much anxiety, and much difference of opinion had been expressed, when Camillo Capizucca, colonel of the Italian Legion, obtained a hearing. A man bold in words as in deeds, he vehemently denounced the pusillanimity which would wait either for Parma or for nightfall. "What difference will it make," he asked, "whether we defer our action until either darkness or the General arrives? In each case we give the enemy time enough to destroy the dyke, and thoroughly to relieve the city. That done, what good can be accomplished by our arms? Then our disheartened soldiers will either shrink from a fruitless combat or march to certain death." Having thus, very warmly but very sagaciously, defined the position in which all were placed, he proceeded to declare that he claimed, neither for himself nor for his legion, any superiority over the rest of the army. He knew not that the Italians were more to be relied upon than others in the time of danger, but this he did know, that no man in the world was so devoted as he was to the Prince of Parma. To show that devotion by waiting with folded arms behind a wall until the Prince should arrive to extricate his followers, was not in his constitution. He claimed the right to lead his Italians against the enemy at once—in the front rank, if others chose to follow; alone, if the rest preferred to wait till a better leader should arrive.¹

The words of the Italian colonel sent a thrill through all who heard him. Next in command under Capizucca was his camp-marshal, an officer who bore the illustrious name of Piccolomini—father of the Duke Ottavio, of whom so much was to be heard at a later day throughout the fell scenes of that portion of the eighty years' tragedy now enacting, which was

¹ Strada, II. 357, 358, *seq.*

to be called the Thirty Years' War of Germany. The camp-marshal warmly seconded the proposition of his colonel Mansfeld, pleased with such enthusiasm among his officers, yielded to their wishes, which were, in truth, his own. Six companies of the Italian Legion were in his encampment, while the remainder were stationed, far away, upon the bridge, under command of his son, Count Charles. Early in the morning, before the passage across the dyke had been closed, the veteran condottiere, pricking his ears as he snuffed the battle from afar, had contrived to send a message to his son.

"Charles, my boy," were his words, "to-day we must either beat them or burst."¹

Old Peter Ernest felt that the long-expected, long-deferred assault was to be made that morning in full force, and that it was necessary for the royalists, on both bridge and dyke, to hold their own. Piccolomini now drew up three hundred of his Italians, picked veterans all, and led them in marching order to Mansfeld. That general at the same moment, received another small but unexpected reinforcement. A portion of the Spanish Legion, which had long been that of Pedro Pacchi, lay at the extreme verge of the Stabroek encampment, several miles away. Aroused by the distant cannonading, and suspecting what had occurred, Don Juan d'Aquila, the colonel in command, marched without a moment's delay to Mansfeld's head-quarters, at the head of all the force he could muster—about two hundred strong. With him came Cardona, Gonzales de Castro, Toralva, and other distinguished officers. As they arrived, Capizucca was just setting forth for the field. There arose a dispute for precedence between the Italians and the Spaniards. Capizucca had first demanded the privilege of leading what seemed a forlorn hope, and was unwilling to yield his claim to the new comer. On the other hand, the Spaniards were not disposed to follow where they felt entitled to lead. The quarrel was growing warm, when Aquila, seizing his Italian rival by the hand, pro-

¹Charles, mon fils, il te faut vaincre ou crever." Le Petit, II. 514.

tested that it was not a moment for friends to wrangle for precedence.

"Shoulder to shoulder," said he, "let us go into this business, and let our blows rather fall on our enemies' heads than upon each other's." This terminated the altercation. The Italians and Spaniards—in battle array as they were—all dropped on their knees, offered a brief prayer to the Holy Virgin, and then, in the best possible spirits, set forth along the dyke. Next to fort Stabroek—whence they issued—was the Palisade Fort, nearly a mile removed, which the patriots had nearly carried, and between which and St. George, another mile farther on, their whole force was established.¹

The troops under Capizucca and Aquila soon reached the Palisade, and attacked the besiegers, while the garrison, cheered by the unexpected relief, made a vigorous sortie. There was a brief sharp contest, in which many were killed on both sides; but at last the patriots fell back upon their own entrenchments, and the fort was saved. Its name was instantly changed to Fort Victory, and the royalists then prepared to charge the fortified camp of the rebels, in the centre of which the dyke-cutting operations were still in progress. At the same moment, from the opposite end of the bulwark, a cry was heard along the whole line of the dyke. From Fort Holy Cross, at the Scheldt end, the welcome intelligence was suddenly communicated—as if by a magnetic impulse—that Alexander was in the field.²

It was true. Having been up half the night, as usual, keeping watch along his bridge, where he was ever expecting a fatal attack, he had retired for a few hours' rest in his camp at Beveren. Aroused at day-break by the roar of the cannon, he had hastily thrown on his armour, mounted his horse, and, at the head of two hundred pikemen, set forth for the scene of action. Detained on the bridge by a detachment of the Antwerp fleet, which had been ordered to make a diversion in that quarter, he had, after beating off their vessels with his boat-artillery, and charging Count Charles Mansfeld to heed

¹ Strada, *ubi sup.*

² *Ibid.*

well the brief injunction of old Peter Ernest, made all the haste he could to the Kowenstyn. Arriving at Fort Holy Cross, he learned from Mondragon how the day was going. Three thousand rebels, he learned, were established on the dyke, Fort Palisade was tottering, a fleet from both sides was cannonading the Spanish entrenchments, the salt water was flowing across the breach already made. His seven months' work, it seemed, had come to nought. The navigation was already open from the sea to Antwerp, the Kowenstyn was in the rebels' hands. But Alexander was not prone to premature despair. "I arrived," said he to Philip in a letter written on the same evening, "at the very nick of time."¹ A less hopeful person might have thought that he had arrived several hours too late. Having brought with him every man that could be spared from Beveren and from the bridge, he now ordered Camillo del Monte to transport some additional pieces of artillery from Holy Cross and from Saint James to Fort Saint George. At the same time a sharp cannonade was to be maintained upon the rebel fleet from all the forts.²

Mondragon, with a hundred musketeers and pikemen, was sent forward likewise as expeditiously as possible to Saint George. No one could be more alert. The battered veteran, hero of some of the most remarkable military adventures that history has ever recorded,³ fought his way on foot, in the midst of the fray, like a young ensign who had his first laurels to win. And, in truth, the day was not one for cunning manœuvres, directed, at a distance, by a skillful tactician. It was a brisk close contest, hand to hand and eye to eye—a Homeric encounter, in which the chieftains were to prove a right to command by their personal prowess. Alexander, descending suddenly—dramatically, as it were—when the battle seemed lost—like a deity from the clouds—was to justify, by the strength of his arm, the enthusiasm which his name always awakened. Having, at a glance, taken in the

¹ MS. Letter before cited. "Llegue a la mayor conjuntura del mundo que fue quando se habia comenzado el

fuego."

² Strada, *ubi sup.*

³ See 'Rise of the Dutch Republic,' vol. ii. chap. iii., and vol. iii. chap. iii.

whole situation, he made his brief arrangements, going from rank to rank, and disposing his troops in the most effective manner. He said but few words, but his voice had always a telling effect.

"The man who refuses, this day, to follow me," he said, "has never had regard to his own honour, nor has God's cause or the King's ever been dear to his heart."¹

His disheartened Spaniards and Italians—roused as by a magic trumpet—eagerly demanded to be led against the rebels. And now from each end of the dyke, the royalists were advancing toward the central position occupied by the patriots. While Capizucca and Aquila were occupied at Fort Victory, Parma was steadily cutting his way from Holy Cross to Saint George. On foot, armed with sword and shield, and in coat of mail, and marching at the head of his men along the dyke, surrounded by Bevilacqua, Bentivoglio, Manriquez, Sforza, and other officers of historic name and distinguished courage, now upon the summit of the causeway, now on its shelving banks, now breast-high in the waters, through which lay the perilous path, contending at every inch with the scattered bands of the patriots, who slowly retired to their entrenched camp, and with the Antwerp and Zeeland vessels, whose balls tore through the royalist ranks, the General at last reached Saint George. On the preservation of that post depended the whole fortune of the day, for Parma had already received the welcome intelligence that the Palisade—now Fort Victory—had been regained. He instantly ordered an outer breast-work of wool-sacks and sand-bags to be thrown up in front of Saint George, and planted a battery to play point-blank at the enemy's entrenchments. Here the final issue was to be made.

The patriots and Spaniards were thus all enclosed in the mile-long space between St. George and the Palisade. Upon that narrow strip of earth, scarce six paces in width, more than five thousand men met in mortal combat—a narrow arena for so many gladiators, hemmed in on both sides by the sea. The

¹ Strada, II. 360.

patriots had, with solemn ceremony, before starting upon their enterprise, vowed to destroy the dyke and relieve Antwerp, or to perish in the attempt. They were true to their vow. Not the ancient Batavians or Nervii had ever manifested more tenacity against the Roman legions than did their descendants against the far-famed Spanish infantry upon this fatal day. The fight on the Kowenstyn was to be long remembered in the military annals of Spain and Holland. Never, since the curtain first rose upon the great Netherland tragedy, had there been a fiercer encounter.¹ Flinching was impossible. There was scant room for the play of pike and dagger, and, close packed as were the combatants, the dead could hardly fall to the ground. It was a mile-long series of separate mortal duels, and the oozy dyke was soon slippery with blood.

From both sides, under Capizucca and Aquila on the one hand, and under Alexander on the other, the entrenchments of the patriots were at last assaulted, and as the royalists fell thick and fast beneath the breast-work which they were storming, their comrades clambered upon their bodies, and attempted, from such vantage-ground, to effect an entrance. Three times the invaders were beaten back with heavy loss, and after each repulse the attack was renewed with fresh vigour, while within the entrenchments the pioneers still plied the pick and shovel, undismayed by the uproar around them.

A fourth assault, vigorously made, was cheerfully repelled by the Antwerpers and Hollanders, clustering behind their breast-works, and looking steadily into their enemies' eyes. Captain Heraugiere—of whom more was to be heard one day—had led two hundred men into action, and now found himself at the head of only thirteen.² The loss had been as severe among many other patriot companies, as well as in the Spanish ranks, and again the pikemen of Spain and Italy faltered before the iron visages and cordial blows of the Hollanders.

¹ "Mibi tanto accuratius dicendum," says Strada, "quanto rarò alias in Belgio, audacioris loco, aut fallacioris alternatione victoriae, aut nobilioribus

audentium exemplis, aut præsentioris caelitum ope, dimicatum est, &c. II. 349.

² Meteren, *ubi sup.*

This work had lasted a good hour and a half, when at last, on the fifth assault, a wild and mysterious apparition renewed the enthusiasm of the Spaniards. The figure of the dead commander of the old Spanish Legion, Don Pedro Pacchi, who had fallen a few months before at the siege of Dendermonde, was seen charging in front of his regiment, clad in his well-known armour, and using the gestures which had been habitual with him in life.¹ No satisfactory explanation was ever made of this singular delusion, but it was general throughout the ranks, and in that superstitious age was as effective as truth. The wavering Spaniards rallied once more under the guidance of their phantom leader, and again charged the breast-work of the patriots. Toralva, mounting upon the back of one of his soldiers, was first to vault into the entrenchments. At the next instant he lay desperately wounded on the ground, but was close followed by Capizucca, sustained by a determined band. The entrenchment was carried, but the furious conflict still continued. At nearly the same moment, however, several of the patriot vessels were observed to cast off their moorings, and to be drifting away from the dyke. A large number of the rest had been disabled by the hot fire, which by Alexander's judicious orders had been directed upon the fleet. The ebbing tide left no choice to the commander of the others but to retreat or to remain and fall into the enemy's hands, should he gain the day. Had they risked the dangerous alternative, it might have ensured the triumph of the whole enterprise, while their actual decision proved most disastrous in the end.

"We have conquered," cried Alexander, stretching his arm towards the receding waters. "The sea deserts the impious heretics. Strike from them now their last hope, and cut off their retreat to the departing ships."² The Spaniards were not slow to perceive their advantage, while the courage of the patriots at last began to ebb with the tide. The day was lost. In the hour of transitory triumph the leaders of the expedition had turned their backs on their followers, and now, after

¹ Strada, II. 364.

² Strada, II. 365.

so much heroism had been exhibited, fortune too had averted her face. The grim resistance changed to desperate panic, and a mad chase began along the blood-stained dyke. Some were slain with spear and bullet, others were hunted into the sea, many were smothered in the ooze along the edge of the embankment. The fugitives, making their way to the retreating vessels, were pursued by the Spaniards, who swam after them, with their swords in their teeth, and engaged them in mortal combat in the midst of the waves.

"And so we cut all their throats," said Parma, "the rebels on every side remaining at our mercy, and I having no doubt that my soldiers would avenge the loss of their friends."¹

The English and the Scotch, under Balfour and Morgan, were the very last to abandon the position which they had held so manfully seven hours long. Honest Captain James, who fought to the last, and described the action the same night in the fewest possible words, was of opinion that the fleet had moved away only to obtain a better position. "They put off to have more room to play on the enemy," said he; "but the Hollanders and Zeelanders, seeing the enemy come on so hotly, and thinking our galleys would leave them, abandoned their string. The Scots, seeing them to retire, left their string. The enemy pursued very hotly; the Englishmen stood to repulse, and are put most to the sword. In this shameful retreat there were slain or drowned to the number of two thousand."² The blunt Englishman was justly indignant that an enterprise, so nearly successful, had been ruined by the desertion of its chiefs. "We had cut the dyke in three places," said he; "*but left it most shamefully for want of commandment.*"³

Poor Koppen Loppen—whose blunders on former occasions had caused so much disaster—was now fortunate enough to expiate them by a soldier's death. Admiral Haultain had, as we have seen, been drowned at the commencement of the

¹ "Y asi los degollaron a todos, quedando por una parte y otra a nuestra misericordia, y yo flador que venaron la perdida de los amigos."

Parma to Philip II., May 26, 1585, MS.

² James to Walsingham, MS. before cited.

³ Ibid.

action.¹ Justinus de Nassau, at its close, was more successful in his retreat to the ships. He, too, sprang into the water when the overthrow was absolute; but, alighting in some shallows, was able to conceal himself among weeds and water-lilies till he had divested himself of his armour, when he made his escape by swimming to a boat, which conveyed him to Lillo. Roelke van Deest, an officer of some note, was so horribly wounded in the face, that he was obliged to wear a mask for the remainder of his life.²

Parma, overjoyed at his victory, embraced Capizucca before the whole army, with warm expressions of admiration for his conduct. Both the Italian colonel and his Spanish rival Aquila were earnestly recommended to Philip for reward and promotion. The wounded Toralva was carried to Alexander's own quarters, and placed in Alexander's own bed, where he remained till his recovery, and was then presented—a distinction which he much valued—with the armour which the Prince had worn on the day of the battle.³ Parma himself, so soon as the action was concluded, went with his chief officers straight from the field to the little village-church of Stabroek, where he fell upon his knees and offered up fervent thanks for his victory. He next set about repairing the ruptured dyke, damaged in many places but not hopelessly ruined, and for this purpose the bodies of the rebels, among other materials, were cast by hundreds into the ditches which their own hands had dug.⁴

Thus ended the eight hours' fight on the Kowenstyn. "The feast lasted from seven to eight hours," said Parma, "with the most brave obstinacy on both sides that has been seen for many a long day."⁵ A thousand royalists were killed and twice as many patriots, and the issue of the conflict was most uncertain up to the very last.

¹ This appears from the letter of Captain James. The other accounts describe the death of the Admiral as occurring in the general rout at the close of the battle.

² Van Wyn op Wagenaar, viii. 40.

³ Strada, II. 364.

⁴ Ibid. 367.

⁵ "Y habiendo durado esta fiesta, obra de 7 o 8 hore, con la mas brava obstinacion de entrambas partes que se ha visto hartos dias ha." Parma to Philip II, MS. before cited.

"Our loss is greater than I wish it was," wrote Alexander to Philip: "It was a very close thing, and I have never been more anxious in my life as to the result for your Majesty's service. The whole fate of the battle was hanging all the time by a thread."¹ More than ever were reinforcements necessary, and it was only by a miracle that the victory had at last been gained with such slender resources. "'Tis a large, long, laborious, expensive, and most perilous war," said Parma, when urging the claims of Capizucca and Aquila, "for we have to fight every minute; and there are no castles and other rewards, so that if soldiers are not to have promotion, they will lose their spirit."² Thirty-two of the rebel vessels grounded, and fell into the hands of the Spaniards, who took from them many excellent pieces of artillery. The result was most conclusive and most disheartening for the patriots.

Meantime—as we have seen—Hohenlo and Sainte Aldegonde had reached Antwerp in breathless haste to announce their triumph. They had been met on the quay by groups of excited citizens, who eagerly questioned the two generals arriving thus covered with laurels from the field of battle, and drank with delight all the details of the victory. The poor dying Spinola was exhibited in triumph, the boat-load of bread-stuffs received with satisfaction, and vast preparations were made to receive, on wharves and in storehouses, the plentiful supplies about to arrive. Beacons and bonfires were lighted, the bells from all the steeples rang their merriest peals, cannon thundered in triumph not only in Antwerp itself, but subsequently at Amsterdam and other more distant cities. In due time a magnificent banquet was spread in the town-house to greet the conquering Hohenlo. Immense gratification was expressed by those of the reformed religion; dire threats were

¹ "De los nuestros tambien han quedado mas de los que yo quisiera—ha sido pendencia tan reñida—que hartas veces ha puesto harto mas cuidado el ver termino en que estaba el servicio de V. M. Todo esto ha estado

colgado de un hilo." Parma to Philip II. MS. before cited.

² "Guerra larga, trabajosa, costosa, y muy peligrosa, pues sempre se trata de pelear, y que no se hay castillos ni otros premios," &c. (Ibid.)

uttered against the Catholics. Some were for hanging them all out of hand, others for throwing them into the Scheldt ; the most moderate proposed packing them all out of town so soon as the siege should be raised—an event which could not now be delayed many days longer.

Hohenlo, placed on high at the head of the banquet-table, assumed the very god of war. Beside and near him sat the loveliest dames of Antwerp, rewarding his bravery with their brightest smiles. The Count drained huge goblets to their health, to the success of the patriots, and to the confusion of the royalists, while, as he still drank and feasted, the trumpet, kettle-drum, and cymbal, and merry peal of bell without, did honour to his triumph. So gay and gallant was the victor, that he announced another banquet on the following day, still further to celebrate the happy release of Antwerp, and invited the fair ladies around him again to grace the board. It is recorded that the gentlewoman next him responded with a sigh, that, if her presentiments were just, the morrow would scarcely be so joyful as the present day had been, and that she doubted whether the triumph were not premature.¹

Hardly had she spoken when sinister sounds were heard in the streets. The first few stragglers, survivors of the deadly fight, had arrived with the fatal news that all was lost, the dyke regained, the Spaniards victorious, the whole band of patriots cut to pieces. A few frightfully-wounded and dying sufferers were brought into the banqueting-hall. Hohenlo sprang from the feast—interrupted in so ghastly a manner—pursued by shouts and hisses. Howls of execration saluted him in the streets, and he was obliged to conceal himself for a time, to escape the fury of the populace.²

On the other hand, Parma was, not unnaturally, overjoyed at the successful issue to the combat, and expressed himself on the subject in language of (for him) unusual exultation. "To-day, Sunday, 26th of June," said he, in a letter to Philip, despatched by special courier on the very same night, "the

¹ Mertens en Torps, v. 242.

² Ibid. Compare Bor, Meteren, Hoofd, et al., *ubi sup.*

Lord has been pleased to grant to your Majesty a great and most signal victory. In this conjuncture of so great importance it may be easily conceived that the best results that can be desired will be obtained if your Majesty is now ready to do what is needful. I congratulate your Majesty very many times on this occasion, and I desire to render infinite thanks to Divine Providence.”¹

He afterwards proceeded, in a rapid and hurried manner, to give his Majesty the outlines of the battle, mentioning, with great encomium, Capizucca and Aquila, Mondragon and Vasto, with many other officers, and recommending them for reward and promotion; praising, in short, heartily and earnestly, all who had contributed to the victory, except himself, to whose personal exertions it was chiefly due. “As for good old Mansfeld,” said he, “he bore himself like the man he is, and he deserves that your Majesty should send him a particular mark of your royal approbation, writing to him yourself pleasantly in Spanish, which is that which will be most highly esteemed by him.”² Alexander hinted also that Philip would do well to bestow upon Mansfeld the countship of Biart, as a reward for his long years of faithful service.³

This action on the Kowenstyn terminated the effective resistance of Antwerp. A few days before, the monster-vessel, in the construction of which so much time and money had been consumed, had at last been set afloat. She had been called the War's End, and, so far as Antwerp was concerned, the fates that presided over her birth seemed to have been paltering in a double sense when the ominous name was con-

¹ “Doy a V. M. muy muchas vezes la enora buena y infinitas gracias a la Divina,” &c. MS. letter before cited.

² “El buen viejo del conde de Mansfeld anduvo como quien es, y merece que V. M. se le mande en particular agradecer, escribiendole en Español regaladamente que es lo que mas estimaria,” &c. (Ibid.)

³ Ibid. The account of this remarkable action has been mainly gathered from the manuscript letters of Parma to Philip, written from the scene itself, of some Englishmen, also

eye-witnesses, and from a careful comparison of contemporary historians. Vide Bor, II. 599, 600. Meteren, xii. 224. Hoofd Vervolgh, 97-99, seq. Bentivoglio, P. II. L. III. 297, seq., whose brother, the Marchese Hippolito Bentivoglio, distinguished himself in the action, and was promoted, in consequence, to a company of lancers by Parma. Strada, II. 354-367. Baudartii, ‘Polemographia,’ II. 27-30. Le Petit, II. 514. Wagenaar, viii. 80. Van Wyn op Wagenaar, viii. 39, 40, et al.

ferred. She was larger than anything previously known in naval architecture ; she had four masts and three helms. Her bulwarks were ten feet thick ; her tops were musket-proof. She had twenty guns of largest size, besides many other pieces of artillery of lesser calibre, the lower tier of which was almost at the water's level. She was to carry one thousand men, and she was so supported on corks and barrels as to be sure to float under any circumstances. Thus she was a great swimming fortress which could not be sunk, and was impervious to shot. Unluckily, however, in spite of her four masts and three helms, she would neither sail nor steer, and she proved but a great, unmanageable and very ridiculous tub, fully justifying all the sarcasms that had been launched upon her during the period of her construction, which had been almost as long as the siege itself.¹

The Spaniards called her the Bugaboo—a monster to scare children withal.² The patriots christened her the Elephant, the Antwerp Folly, the Lost Penny, with many similar appellations.³ A small army might have been maintained for a month, they said, on the money she had cost, or the whole city kept in bread for three months. At last, late in May, a few days before the battle of the Kowenstyn, she set forth from Antwerp, across the submerged land, upon her expedition to sweep all the Spanish forts out of existence, and to bring the war to its end. She came to her own end very briefly, for, after drifting helplessly about for an hour, she stuck fast in the sand in the neighbourhood of Ordam, while the crew and soldiers made their escape, and came back to the city to share in the ridicule which, from first to last, had attached itself to the monster-ship.⁴

Two days after the Kowenstyn affair, Alexander sent an expedition under Count Charles Mansfeld to take possession of the great Bugaboo. The boat, in which were Count

¹ Strada, II. 353. Le Petit, II. 512. Baudartii, 'Polemog.' II. 30, with an admirable engraving. Meteren, Bor, Hooft, et al. *ubi sup.*

² "Caranjamaula." Strada, *ubi sup.*
³ Baudartius, Le Petit, Strada, *ubi sup.*
⁴ Ibid.

Charles, Count Aremberg, his brother de Barbançon, and other noble volunteers, met with an accident: a keg of gun-powder accidentally exploding, blowing Aremberg into the water, whence he escaped unharmed by swimming, and frightfully damaging Mansfeld in the face.¹ This indirect mischief—the only injury ever inflicted by the War's End upon the enemy—did not prevent the rest of the party in the boats from taking possession of the ship, and bringing her in triumph to the Prince of Parma. After being thoroughly examined and heartily laughed at by the Spaniards, she was broken up—her cannon, munitions, and other valuable materials, being taken from her—and then there was an end of the War's End.²

This useless expenditure—against the judgment and entreaties of many leading personages—was but a type of the difficulties with which Sainte Aldegonde had been obliged to contend from the first day of the siege to the last. Every one in the city had felt himself called on to express an opinion as to the proper measures for defence. Diversity of humours, popular license, anarchy, did not constitute the best government for a city beleagured by Alexander Farnese. We have seen the deadly injury inflicted upon the cause at the outset by the brutality of the butchers, and the manful struggle which Sainte Aldegonde had maintained against their cupidity and that of their friends. He had dealt with the thousand difficulties which rose up around him from day to day, but his best intentions were perpetually misconstrued, his most strenuous exertions steadily foiled. It was a city where there was much love of money, and where commerce—always timid by nature, particularly when controlled by alien residents—was often the cause of almost abject cowardice.

From time to time there had been threatening demonstrations made against the burgomaster, who, by protracting the resistance of Antwerp, was bringing about the absolute destruction of a world-wide trade, and the downfall of the most opulent capital in Christendom. There were also many popu-

¹ Strada, II. 368.

² Ibid.

lar riots—very easily inflamed by the Catholic portion of the inhabitants—for bread. “Bread, bread, or peace!” was hoarsely shouted by ill-looking mischievous crowds, that dogged the steps and besieged the doors of Sainte Aldegonde; but the burgomaster had done his best by eloquence of tongue and personal courage, both against mobs and against the enemy, to inspire the mass of his fellow-citizens with his own generous spirit. He had relied for a long time on the negotiation with France, and it would be difficult to exaggerate the disastrous effects produced by the treachery of the Valois court. The historian Le Petit, a resident of Antwerp at the time of the siege, had been despatched on secret mission to Paris, and had communicated to the States’ deputies Sainte Aldegonde’s earnest adjurations that they should obtain, if possible, before it should be too late, an auxiliary force and a pecuniary subsidy. An immediate assistance, even if slight, might be sufficient to prevent Antwerp and its sister cities from falling into the hands of the enemy. On that messenger’s return, the burgomaster, much encouraged by his report, had made many eloquent speeches in the senate, and for a long time sustained the sinking spirits of the citizens.¹

The irritating termination to the triumph actually achieved against the bridge, and the tragical result to the great enterprise against the Kowenstyn, had now thoroughly broken the heart of Antwerp. For the last catastrophe Sainte Aldegonde himself was highly censurable, although the chief portion of the blame rested on the head of Hohenlo. Nevertheless the States of Holland were yet true to the cause of the Union and of liberty. Notwithstanding their heavy expenditures, and their own loss of men, they urged warmly and earnestly the continuance of the resistance, and promised, within at latest three months’ time, to raise an army of twelve thousand foot and seven thousand horse, with which they pledged themselves to relieve the city, or to perish in the endeavour.² At the same time, the legation, which had been sent to England to offer the sovereignty to Queen Elizabeth, sent encouraging

¹ Le Petit, II. 505.

² Meteren, xii. 225.

despatches to Antwerp, assuring the authorities that arrangements for an auxiliary force had been effected; while Elizabeth herself wrote earnestly upon the subject with her own hand.¹

"I am informed," said that Princess, "that through the closing of the Scheldt you are likely to enter into a treaty with the Prince of Parma, the issue of which is very much to be doubted, so far as the maintenance of your privileges is concerned. Remembering the warm friendship which has ever existed between this crown and the house of Burgundy, in the realms of which you are an important member, and considering that my subjects engaged in commerce have always met with more privilege and comity in the Netherlands than in any other country, I have resolved to send you at once, assistance, comfort, and aid. The details of the plan will be stated by your envoys; but be assured that by me you will never be forsaken or neglected."²

The negotiations with Queen Elizabeth—most important for the Netherlands, for England, and for the destinies of Europe—which succeeded the futile diplomatic transactions with France, will be laid before the reader in a subsequent chapter. It is proper that they should be massed by themselves, so that the eye can comprehend at a single glance their whole progress and aspect, as revealed both by public and official, and by secret and hitherto unpublished records. Meantime, so far as regards Antwerp, those negotiations had been too deliberately conducted for the hasty and impatient temper of the citizens.

The spirit of the commercial metropolis, long flagging, seemed at last broken. Despair was taking possession of all hearts. The common people did nothing but complain, the magistrates did nothing but wrangle. In the broad council the debates and dissensions were discouraging and endless. Six of the eight militia-colonels were for holding out at all hazards, while a majority of the eighty captains were for capitulation. The populace was tumultuous and threatening,

¹ Bor, II. 607-609.

² See the letter in Bor, II. 608.

demanding peace and bread at any price. Holland sent promises in abundance, and Holland was sincere; but there had been much disappointment, and there was now infinite bitterness. It seemed obvious that a crisis was fast approaching, and—unless immediate aid should come from Holland or from England—that a surrender was inevitable.¹ La Noue, after five years' imprisonment, had at last been exchanged against Count Philip Egmont. That noble, chief of an ancient house, cousin of the Queen of France, was mortified at being ransomed against a simple Huguenot gentleman—even though that gentleman was the illustrious "iron-armed" La Noue—but he preferred to sacrifice his dignity for the sake of his liberty. He was still more annoyed that one hundred thousand crowns as security were exacted from La Noue—for which the King of Navarre became bondsman—that he would never again bear arms in the Netherlands except in obedience to the French monarch, while no such pledges were required of himself. La Noue visited the Prince of Parma at Antwerp, to take leave, and was received with the courtesy due to his high character and great distinction. Alexander took pleasure in showing him all his fortifications, and explaining to him the whole system of the siege, and La Noue was filled with honest amazement. He declared afterwards that the works were superb and impregnable, and that if he had been on the outside at the head of twelve thousand troops, he should have felt obliged to renounce the idea of relieving the city.² "Antwerp cannot escape you," confessed the veteran Huguenot, "but must soon fall into your hands. And when you enter, I would counsel you to hang up your sword at its gate, and let its capture be the crowning trophy in your list of victories."

"You are right," answered Parma, "and many of my friends have given me the same advice; but how am I to retire, engaged as I am for life in the service of my King?"³

¹ Le Petit, II. 518. Bor, II. 610-613, *seq.*

² Groen v. Prinsterer, 'Archives,' &c. I. 77-80.

³ Le Petit, II. 518.

Such was the opinion of La Noue, a man whose love for the reformed religion and for civil liberty can be as little doubted as his competency to form an opinion upon great military subjects. As little could he be suspected—just coming as he did from an infamous prison, whence he had been at one time invited by Philip II. to emerge, on condition of allowing his eyes to be put out¹—of any partiality for that monarch or his representative.

Moreover, although the States of Holland and the English government were earnestly desirous of relieving the city, and were encouraging the patriots with well-founded promises, the Zeeland authorities were lukewarm. The officers of the Zeeland navy, from which so much was expected, were at last discouraged. They drew up, signed, and delivered to Admiral Justinus de Nassau, a formal opinion to the effect that the Scheldt had now so many dry and dangerous places, and that the tranquil summer-nights—so different from those long, stormy ones of winter—were so short as to allow of no attempt by water likely to be successful to relieve the city.²

Here certainly was much to discourage, and Sainte Aldegonde was at length discouraged. He felt that the last hope of saving Antwerp was gone, and with it all possibility of maintaining the existence of a United Netherland commonwealth. The Walloon Provinces were lost already; Ghent, Brussels, Mechlin, had also capitulated, and, with the fall of Antwerp, Flanders and Brabant must fall. There would be no barrier left even to save Holland itself. Despair entered the heart of the burgomaster, and he listened too soon to its treacherous voice. Yet while he thought a free national state no longer a possibility, he imagined it practicable to secure religious liberty by negotiation with Philip II. He abandoned with a sigh one of the two great objects for which he had struggled side by side with Orange for twenty years, but he thought it possible to secure the other. His purpose was now to obtain a favourable capitulation for Antwerp, and at the same time

¹ Amtrault, '*Vie de La Noue*,' 280, 281-298; '*Rise of the Dutch Republic*,' *ib.* p. 481, 482.

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² Meteren, xii, 225^{re}.

to bring about the submission of Holland, Zeeland, and the other United Provinces, to the King of Spain. Here certainly was a great change of face on the part of one so conspicuous, and hitherto so consistent, in the ranks of Netherland patriots, and it is therefore necessary, in order thoroughly to estimate both the man and the crisis, to follow carefully his steps through the secret path of negotiation into which he now entered, and in which the Antwerp drama was to find its conclusion. In these transactions, the chief actors are, on the one side, the Prince of Parma, as representative of absolutism and the Papacy; on the other, Sainte Aldegonde, who had passed his life as the champion of the Reformation.

No doubt the pressure upon the burgomaster was very great. Tumults were of daily occurrence. Crowds of rioters beset his door with cries of denunciations and demands for bread. A large and turbulent mob upon one occasion took possession of the horse-market, and treated him with personal indignity and violence, when he undertook to disperse them.¹ On the other hand, Parma had been holding out hopes of pardon with more reasonable conditions than could well be expected, and had, with a good deal of art, taken advantage of several trivial circumstances to inspire the burghers with confidence in his good-will. Thus, an infirm old lady in the city happened to imagine herself so dependent upon asses' milk as to have sent her purveyor out of the city, at the peril of his life, to procure a supply from the neighbourhood. The young man was captured, brought to Alexander, from whose hands he very naturally expected the punishment of a spy. The prince, however, presented him, not only with his liberty, but with a she-ass, and loaded the animal with partridges and capons, as a present for the invalid. The magistrates, hearing of the incident, and not choosing to be outdone in courtesy, sent back a waggon-load of old wine and remarkable confectionary as an offering to Alexander, and with this interchange of dainties led the way to the amenities of diplomacy.

¹ Bor, II. 605, 606. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 108

² Strada, II. 372.

Sainte Aldegonde's position had become a painful one. The net had been drawn closely about the city. The bridge seemed impregnable, the great Kowenstyn was irrecoverably in the hands of the enemy, and now all the lesser forts in the immediate vicinity of Antwerp—Borgh't, Hoboken, Cantecroix, Stralen, Berghen, and the rest—had likewise fallen into his grasp. An account of grain, taken on the 1st of June, gave an average of a pound a-head for a month long, or half a pound for two months.¹ This was not the famine-point, according to the standard which had once been established in Leyden; but the courage of the burghers had been rapidly oozing away, under the pressure of their recent disappointments. It seemed obvious to the burgomaster, that the time for yielding had arrived.

"I had maintained the city,"² he said, "for a long period, without any excessive tumult or great effusion of blood—a city where there was such a multitude of inhabitants, mostly merchants or artisans deprived of all their traffic, stripped of their manufactures, destitute of all commodities and means of living. I had done this in the midst of a great diversity of humours and opinions, a vast popular license, a confused anarchy, among a great number of commanders, most of them inexperienced in war; with very little authority of my own, with slender forces of ships, soldiers, and sailors; with slight appearance of support from king or prince without, or of military garrison within; and under all these circumstances I exerted myself to do my uttermost duty in preserving the city, both in regard to its internal government, and by force of arms by land and sea, without sparing myself in any labour or peril.

"I know very well that there are many persons, who, finding themselves quite at their ease, and far away from the hard blows that are passing, are pleased to exhibit their

¹ Meteren, xii. 224, *seq.*

² Marnix de Ste. Aldegonde, 'Commentaire sur les Affaires d'Auver', 1585. Vide 'Notices Historique et Bibliographique sur Philippe de

Marnix,' par Albert La Croix et François van Meenen, Bruxelles, 1858. 'Oeuvres de Philippe de Marnix, précédées d'une Introduction par Edgar Quinet.'

wisdom by sitting in judgment upon others, founding their decision only upon the results. But I demand to be judged by equity and reason, when passion has been set aside. I claim that my honour shall be protected against my calumniators ; for all should remember that I am not the first man, nor shall I be the last, that has been blamed unjustly. All persons employed in public affairs are subject to such hazards, but I submit myself to Him who knows all hearts, and who governs all. I take Him to witness that in the affair of Antwerp, as in all my other actions since my earliest youth, I have most sincerely sought His glory and the welfare of His poor people, without regard to my own private interests.”¹

For it is not alone the fate of Antwerp that is here to be recorded. The fame of Sainte Aldegonde was now seriously compromised. The character of a great man must always be closely scanned and scrutinised ; protected, if needful, against calumny, but always unflinchingly held up to the light. Names illustrious by genius and virtue are History’s most precious treasures, faithfully to be guarded by her, jealously to be watched ; but it is always a misfortune when her eyes are deceived by a glitter which is not genuine.

Sainte Aldegonde was a man of unquestionable genius. His character had ever been beyond the reproach of self-seeking or ignoble ambition. He had multiplied himself into a thousand forms to serve the cause of the United Netherland States, and the services so rendered had been brilliant and frequent. A great change in his conduct and policy was now approaching, and it is therefore the more necessary to examine closely at this epoch his attitude and his character.

Early in June, Richardot, president of the council of Artois, addressed a letter to Sainte Aldegonde, by command of Alexander of Parma, suggesting a secret interview between the burgomaster and the Prince.

On the 8th of June, Sainte Aldegonde replied, in favourable terms, as to the interview ; but observed, that, as he was an official personage, it was necessary for him to communicate

¹ Works just cited.

the project to the magistracy of the city. He expressed likewise the hope that Parma would embrace the present opportunity for making a general treaty with all the Provinces. A special accord with Antwerp, leaving out Holland and Zeeland, would, he said, lead to the utter desolation of that city, and to the destruction of its commerce and manufactures, while the occasion now presented itself to the Prince of "winning praise and immortal glory by bringing back all the country to a voluntary and prompt obedience to his Majesty." He proposed, that, instead of his coming alone, there should be a number of deputies sent from Antwerp to confer with Alexander.¹

On the 11th June, Richardot replied by expressing his own regrets and those of the Prince, that the interview could not have been with the burgomaster alone, but acknowledging the weight of his reasons, and acquiescing in the proposition to send a larger deputation. Three days afterwards, Sainte Aldegonde, on private consultation with some confidential personages, changed his ground; announced his preference for a private interview, under four eyes, with Parma; and requested that a passport might be sent. The passport was accordingly forwarded the same day, with an expression of Alexander's gratification, and with the offer, on the part of Richardot, to come himself to Antwerp as hostage during the absence of the burgomaster in Parma's camp at Beveren.²

Sainte Aldegonde was accordingly about to start on the following day (16th of June), but meantime the affair had got wind. A secret interview, thus projected, was 16th June, regarded by the citizens as extremely suspicious. 1585. There was much bitter insinuation against the burgomaster—many violent demonstrations. "Aldegonde, they say, is going to see Parma," said one of the burghers, "which gives much dissatisfaction, because, 'tis feared that he will make a treaty according to the appetite and pleasure of his High-

¹ 'Correspondance de Richardot avec Marnix de Ste. Aldegonde.' Archivo de Simancas MS.

² Richardot to Marnix, 11 June 1585, MS.

ness, having been gained over to the royal cause by money. He says that it would be a misfortune to send a large number of burghers. Last Sunday (16th June) there was a meeting of the broad council. The preachers came into the assembly, and so animated the citizens by demonstrations of their religion, that all rushed from the council-house, crying with loud voices that they did not desire peace but war."¹

This desire was a healthy and a reasonable one; but, unfortunately, the Antwerpens had not always been so vigorous or so united in their resistance to Parma. At present, however, they were very furious, so soon as the secret purpose of Sainte Aldegonde became generally known. The proposed capitulation, which great mobs had been for weeks long savagely demanding at the hands of the burgomaster, was now ascribed to the burgomaster's unblushing corruption. He had obviously, they thought, been purchased by Spanish ducats to do what he had hitherto been so steadily refusing. A certain Van Werne had gone from Antwerp into Holland a few days before upon his own private affairs, with a safe-conduct from Parma. Sainte Aldegonde had not communicated to him the project then on foot, but he had permitted him to seek a secret interview with Count Mansfeld. If that were granted, Van Werne was to hint that in case the Provinces could promise themselves a religious peace it would be possible, in the opinion of Sainte Aldegonde, to induce Holland and Zeeland and all the rest of the United Provinces, to return to their obedience. Van Werne, on his return to Antwerp, divulged these secret negotiations, and so put a stop to Sainte Aldegonde's scheme of going alone to Parma. "This has given a bad suspicion to the people," wrote the burgomaster to Richardot, "so much so that I fear

¹ "Aldegonde dit qu'il veut aller, et que plusieurs des bourgeois ne veulent, à cause qu'ils craignent qu'il feroit l'accord selon l'appetit et volonté de son Alteze, estant gaigné par force d'argent. Disant être malheureux qu'il y aillent douze bourgeois. — Les predicans ont entré au conseil

le dimanche passé, et ont tellement animés les bourgeois par démonstrances de leur religion, que les bourgeois, sortant du conseil, criaient à haute voix qu'ils ne desiroient paix mais bien la guerre." MS. letter, without date or signature, in the 'Archives Royales de Belgique,' 1585.

to have trouble. The broad council has been in session, but I don't know what has taken place there, and I do not dare to ask."¹

Sainte Aldegonde's motive, as avowed by himself, for seeking a private interview, was because he had received no answer to the main point in his first letter, as to the proposition for a general accord. In order therefore to make the deliberations more rapid, he had been disposed to discuss that preliminary question in secret. "But now," said he to Richardot, "as the affair had been too much divulged, as well by diverse reports and writings sown about, very inopportunistly, as by the arrival of M. Van Werne, I have not found it practicable to set out upon my road, without communication with the members of the government. This has been done, however, not in the way of consultation, but as the announcement of a thing already resolved upon."²

He proceeded to state, that great difficulties had arisen, exactly as he had foreseen. The magistrates would not hear of a general accord, and it was therefore necessary that a delay should be interposed before it would be possible for him to come. He begged Richardot to persuade Alexander, that he was not trifling with him. "It is not," said he, "from lightness, or any other passion, that I am retarding this affair. I will do all in my power to obtain leave to make a journey to the camp of his Highness, at whatever price it may cost. and I hope before long to arrive at my object. If I fail, it must be ascribed to the humours of the people; for my anxiety to restore all the Provinces to obedience to his Majesty is extreme."³

Richardot, in reply, the next day, expressed regret, without

¹ Marnix to Richardot, 16 June, 1585. Arch. de Sim. MS. "De ce que s'y est passé, je l'ignore, sans l'oser demander," &c.

² "Mais comme l'affaire a esté par trop divulguée, tant par divers rapports et écrits semés mal à propos, comme par la venue de S^r Van Werne, je n'ay

trouvé faisable de me mettre en chemin, sans le communiquer aux membres, non pas toutefois en forme de délibération, mais comme une chose que nous avions résolue." Marnix to Richardot, MS., *ubi sup.*

³ Ibid.

astonishment, on the part of Alexander and himself, at the 17th June, intelligence thus received. People had such difference of humour, he said, and all men were not equally capable of reason. Nevertheless the citizens were warned not to misconstrue Parma's gentleness, because he was determined to die, with his whole army, rather than not take Antwerp. "As for the King," said Richardot, "he will lay down all his crowns sooner than abandon this enterprise."¹ Van Werne was represented as free from blame, and sincerely desirous of peace. Richardot had only stated to him, in general terms, that letters had been received from Sainte Aldegonde, expressing an opinion in favour of peace. As for the royalists, they were quite innocent of the reports and writings that had so inopportunately been circulated in the city. It was desirable, however, that the negotiation should not too long be deferred, for otherwise Antwerp might perish, before a general accord with Holland and Zeeland could be made. He begged Sainte Aldegonde to banish all anxiety as to Parma's sentiments towards himself or the community. "Put yourself, Sir, quite at your ease," said he. "His Highness is in no respects dissatisfied with you, nor prone to conceive any indignation against this poor people."² He assured the burgomaster that he was not suspected of lightness, nor of a wish to delay matters, but he expressed solicitude with regard to the threatening demonstrations which had been made against him in Antwerp. "For," said he, "popular governments are full of a thousand hazards, and it would be infinitely painful to me, if you should come to harm."³

Thus it would appear that it was Sainte Aldegonde who was chiefly anxious to effect the reconciliation of Holland and Zeeland with the King. The initiative of this project to

¹ Richardot to Marnix, 17 June, 1585, MS. "Mettra toutes ses couronnes plutot qu'abandonner cette entreprise," &c.

² "Bref, Monsieur, mettez vous a repos. Car son Altesse n'est en rien mal satisfaite de vous, ni facile a cou-

cevoir quelque indignation contre ce pauvre peuple." MS. *ubi sup.*

³ "Car les gouvernemens populaires sont plains de mil hazards, et il me desplaissait infiniment que vous eussiez mal." (Ibid.)

include all the United Provinces in one scheme with the reduction of Antwerp came originally from him, and was opposed, at the outset, by the magistrates of that city, by the Prince of Parma and his councillors, and by the States of Holland and Zeeland. The demonstrations on the part of the preachers, the municipal authorities, and the burghers, against Sainte Aldegonde and his plan for a secret interview, so soon as it was divulged, made it impossible to carry that project into effect.

"Aldegonde, who governs Antwerp," wrote Parma to Philip, "was endeavouring, eight days ago, to bring about some kind of negotiation for an accord. He manifested a desire to come hither for the sake of a personal interview with me, which I permitted. It was to have taken place last Sunday, 16th of this month, but by reason of a certain popular tumult, which arose out of these circumstances, it has been necessary to defer the meeting."¹

There was much disappointment felt by the royalist at this unsatisfactory result. "These bravadoes and impertinent demonstrations on the part of some of your people," wrote Richardot, ten days later, "will be the destruction of the whole country, and will convert the Prince's gentleness into anger. 'Tis these good and zealous patriots, trusting to a little favourable breeze that blew for a few days past, who have been the cause of all this disturbance, and who are ruining their miserable country—miserable, I say, for having produced such abortions as themselves."²

Notwithstanding what had passed, however, Richardot intimated that Alexander was still ready to negotiate. "And if you, Sir," he concluded, in his letter to Aldegonde, "concerning whom many of our friends have at present a sinister

¹ "De ocho dias ha procurado Aldegonde, qui gobierna Anveres, travar alguna platica de acuerdo con aquella villa, mostrando desseo de querer venir el mismo a verse conmigo, loquel le permité. Havia de haverlo hecho este ultimo domingo 16 del presente, pero con la escusa de cierto tumulto popular, que sobre el caso havia sucedido

la ha tenido para differirlo." Parma to Philip II., 20 June, 1585. Arch. de Sim. MS.

² Richardot to Marnix, 30 June, 1585. "Ce sont ces bons et zeleux patriotes qui ruynent leur miserable patrie, miserable, dis je, d'avoir produit tels avortons." Arch. de Sim. MS.

opinion,—as if your object was to circumvent us,—are willing to proceed roundly and frankly, as I myself firmly believe that you will do, we may yet hope for a favourable issue.”¹

Thus the burgomaster was already the object of suspicion to both parties. The Antwerpers denounced him as having been purchased by Spanish gold; the royalists accused him of intending to overreach the King. It was not probable therefore that all were correct in their conjectures.

At last it was arranged that deputies should be appointed by the broad council to commence a negociation with Parma. Sainte Aldegonde informed Richardot, that he would 5th July, accompany them, if his affairs should permit. He 1585. protested his sincerity and frankness throughout the whole affair. “They try to calumniate me,” he said, “as much on one side as on the other, but I will overcome by my innocence all the malice of my slanderers. If his Highness should be pleased to grant us some liberty for our religion, I dare to promise such faithful service as will give very great satisfaction.”²

Four days later, Sainte Aldegonde himself, together with M. de Duffel, M. de Schoonhoven, and Adrian Hesselt, came to Parma’s camp at Beveren, as deputies on the part of the Antwerp authorities. They were courteously received by the Prince, and remained three days as his guests. During the period of this visit, the terms of a capitulation were thoroughly discussed, between Alexander and his councillors upon one part, and the four deputies on the other. The envoys endeavoured, with all the arguments at their command, to obtain the consent of the Prince to three preliminary points which they laid down as indispensable. Religious liberty must be granted, the citadel must not be reconstructed, a foreign garrison must not be admitted; they said. As it was the firm intention of the King, however, not to make the slightest concession on any one of these points, the discussion was not a very profitable one. Besides the public interviews at which all

¹ Richardot to Marnix, 30 June, 1585.

² Marnix to Richardot, 5 July, 1585. Arch. de Sim. MS.

the negotiators were present, there was a private conference between Parma and Sainte Aldegonde which lasted more than four hours, in which each did his best to enforce his opinions upon the other. The burgomaster endeavoured to persuade the Prince with all the eloquence for which he was so renowned, that the hearts not of the Antwerpers only, but of the Hollanders and Zeelanders, were easily to be won at that moment. Give them religious liberty, and attempt to govern them by gentleness rather than by Spanish garrisons, and the road was plain to a complete reconciliation of all the Provinces with his Majesty.

Alexander, who knew his master to be inexorable upon these three points, was courteous but peremptory in his statements. He recommended that the rebels should take into consideration their own declining strength, the inexhaustible resources of the King, the impossibility of obtaining succour from France, and the perplexing dilatoriness of England, rather than waste their time in idle expectations of a change in the Spanish policy. He also intimated, obliquely but very plainly, to Sainte Aldegonde, that his own fortune would be made, and that he had everything to hope from his Majesty's bounty, if he were now willing to make himself useful in carrying into effect the royal plans.¹

The Prince urged these views with so much eloquence, that he seemed, in his own words, to have been directly inspired by the Lord for this special occasion.² Sainte Aldegonde, too, was signally impressed by Alexander's language, and thoroughly fascinated—magnetized, as it were—by his character. He subsequently declared, that he had often conversed familiarly with many eloquent personages, but that he had never known a man more powerful or persuasive than the Prince of Parma.³ He could honestly say of him—as Hasdrubal had said of Scipio—that Farnese was even more admirable when seen face to face, than he had seemed when one only heard of his glorious achievements.⁴

¹ Strada, II. 379. Comp. Bor, II. 606. Hoofd Vervolgh, 109,

² Strada, *ubi sup.*

³ Ibid,

⁴ Ibid,

"The burgomaster and three deputies," wrote Parma to Philip, "were here until the 12th July. We discussed the 30th July, points and form of a capitulation, and they have
1585. gone back thoroughly satisfied. Sainte Aldegonde especially was much pleased with the long interview which he had with me, alone, and which lasted more than three hours. I told him, as well as my weakness and suffering from the tertian fever permitted, all that God inspired me to say on our behalf."¹

Nevertheless, if Sainte Aldegonde and his colleagues went away thoroughly satisfied, they had reason, soon after their return, to become thoroughly dejected. The magistrates and burghers would not listen to a proposition to abandon the three points, however strongly urged to do so by arguments drawn from the necessity of the situation, and by representations of Parma's benignity. As for the burgomaster, he became the target for calumny, so soon as his three hours' private interview became known; and the citizens loudly declared that his head ought to be cut off, and sent in a bag, as a present, to Philip, in order that the traitor might meet the sovereign with whom he sought a reconciliation, face to face, as soon as possible.²

The deputies, immediately after their return, made their report to the magistrates, as likewise to the colonels and
16th July, captains, and to the deans of guilds. Next day,
1585. although it was Sunday, there was a session of the broad council, and Sainte Aldegonde made a long address, in which—as he stated in a letter to Richardot—he related everything that had passed in his private conversation with Alexander. An answer was promised to Parma on the following Tuesday, but the burgomaster spoke very discouragingly as to the probability of an accord.

¹ "Se dieron los puntos y forma del acuerdo, con que tomaron a yr muy satisfechos, y el Aldeg^d en particular de la larga platica que a solas con el mas de 3 horas tuve, diziendole lo que Dios me inspiro a n^{ro} proposito, y mejor me permitió la flaqueza y tra-

vajo de la terciana." Parma to Philip II., 30 July, 1585, Arch. de Sim. MS.

² Bor, II. 606. Hoofft Vervolgh, 109.

³ Marnix to Richardot, 15 July, 1585, MS.

"The joy with which our return was greeted," he said, "was followed by a general disappointment and sadness, so soon as the result was known. The want of a religious toleration, as well as the refusal to concede on the other two points, has not a little altered the hearts of all, *even of the Catholics*. A citadel and a garrison are considered ruin and desolation to a great commercial city. I have done what I can to urge the acceptance of such conditions as the Prince is willing to give, and have spoken in general terms of his benign intentions. The citizens still desire peace. Had his Highness been willing to take both religions under his protection, he might have won all hearts, and very soon all the other Provinces would have returned to their obedience, while the clemency and magnanimity of his Majesty would thus have been rendered admirable throughout the world."¹

The power to form an accurate conception as to the nature of Philip and of other personages with whom he was dealing, and as to the general signs of his times, seems to have been wanting in the character of the gifted Aldegonde. He had been dazzled by the personal presence of Parma, and he now spoke of Philip II., as if his tyranny over the Netherlands—which for twenty years had been one horrible and uniform whole—were the accidental result of circumstances, not the necessary expression of his individual character, and might be easily changed at will—as if Nero, at a moment's warning, might transform himself into Trajan. It is true that the innermost soul of the Spanish king could by no possibility be displayed to any contemporary, as it reveals itself, after three centuries, to those who study the record of his most secret thoughts; but, at any rate, it would seem that his career had been sufficiently consistent, to manifest the amount of "clemency and magnanimity" which he might be expected to exercise.

"Had his Majesty," wrote Sainte Aldegonde, "been willing, since the year sixty-six, to pursue a course of toleration, the

¹ Marnix to Richardot, just cited.

15th July, memory of his reign would have been sacred to all
 1585. posterity, with an immortal praise of sapience, benignity, and sovereign felicity."¹

This might be true, but nevertheless a tolerating Philip, in the year 1585, ought to have seemed to Sainte Aldegonde an impossible idea.

"The emperors," continued the burgomaster, "who immediately succeeded Tiberius were the cause of the wisdom which displayed itself in the good Trajan—also a Spaniard—and in Antoninus, Verus, and the rest.² If you think that this city, by the banishment of a certain number of persons, will be content to abandon the profession of the reformed faith, you are much mistaken. You will see, with time, that the exile of this religion will be accompanied by a depopulation and a sorrowful ruin and desolation of this flourishing city. But this will be as it pleases God. Meantime I shall not fail to make all possible exertions to induce the citizens to consent to a reconciliation with his Majesty. The broad council will soon give their answer, and then we shall send a deputation. We shall invite Holland and Zeeland to join with us, but there is little hope of their consent."³

Certainly there was little hope of their consent. Sainte Aldegonde was now occupied in bringing about the capitulation of Antwerp, without any provision for religious liberty—a concession which Parma had most distinctly refused—and it was not probable that Holland and Zeeland, after twenty years of hard fighting, and with an immediate prospect of assistance from England—could now be induced to resign the great object of the contest without further struggle.

It was not until a month had elapsed that the authorities of Antwerp sent their propositions to the Prince of Parma.

12th Aug., On the 12th August, however, Sainte Aldegonde,
 1585. accompanied by the same three gentlemen who had been employed on the first mission, and by seventeen others

¹ Marnix to Richardot, just cited.

² "Les premiers empereurs apres Tybere rendirent sages et advisez pre-

mièrement le bon Trajan, aussi Espagnol, et puis Antonin, Verus," &c. (Ibid.) ³ Ibid.

besides, proceeded with safe-conduct to the camp at Beveren. Here they were received with great urbanity, and hospitably entertained by Alexander, who received their formal draft of articles for a capitulation, and referred it to be reported upon to Richardot, Pamel, and Vanden Burgh. Meantime there were many long speeches and several conferences, sometimes between all the twenty-one envoys and the Prince together; on other occasions, more secret ones, at which only Aldegonde and one or two of his colleagues were present. It had been obvious, from the date of the first interview, in the preceding month, that the negociation would be of no avail until the government of Antwerp was prepared to abandon all the conditions which they had originally announced as indispensable. Alexander had not much disposition and no authority whatever to make concessions.

"So far as I can understand," Parma had written on the 30th July, "they are very far from a conclusion. They have most exorbitant ideas, talking of some kind of liberty of conscience, besides refusing on any account to accept of garrisons, and having many reasons to allege on such subjects."¹

The discussions, therefore, after the deputies had at last arrived, though courteously conducted, could scarcely be satisfactory to both parties. "The articles were thoroughly deliberated upon," wrote Alexander, "by all the deputies, nor did I fail to have private conferences with Aldegonde, that most skilful and practised lawyer and politician," as well as with two or three of the others. I did all in my power to bring them to a thorough recognition of their errors, and to produce a confidence in his Majesty's clemency, in order that they might concede what was needful for the interests of the Catholic religion and the security of the city. They heard all I had to say without exasperating themselves, and without interposing any strong objections, except in the matter of

¹ "Hasta agora bien lejos de concluir, segun las exhorvitanacias que presentan de querer alguna forma de libertad de conciencia, y en ninguna manera, guarnicion, alegando muchas

cosas in su favor." MS. letter, 30 July, 1585.

² "Tan platico letrado y politico." Parma to Philip II., 26 Aug. 1585, MS.

religion, and, still more, in the matter of the citadel and the garrison. Aldegonde took much pains to persuade me that it would be ruinous for a great, opulent, commercial city to submit to a foreign military force. Even if compelled by necessity to submit now, the inhabitants would soon be compelled by the same necessity to abandon the place entirely, and to leave in ruins one of the most splendid and powerful cities in the world, and in this opinion Catholics and heretics unanimously concurred. The deputies protested, with one accord, that so pernicious and abominable a thing as a citadel and garrison could not even be proposed to their constituents. I answered, that, so long as the rebellion of Holland and Zeeland lasted, it would be necessary for your Majesty to make sure of Antwerp, by one or the other of those means, but promised that the city should be relieved of the incumbrance so soon as those islands should be reduced.

"Sainte Aldegonde was not discouraged by this statement, but in the hope of convincing others, or with the wish of showing that he had tried his best, desired that I would hear him before the council of state. I granted the request, and Sainte Aldegonde then made another long and very elegant oration, intended to divert me from my resolution."¹

It must be confessed—if the reports, which have come down to us of that long and elegant oration be correct—that the enthusiasm of the burgomaster for Alexander was rapidly degenerating into idolatry.

"We are not here, O invincible Prince," he said, "that we may excuse, by an anxious legation, the long defence which we have made of our homes. Who could have feared any danger to the most powerful city in the Netherlands from so moderate a besieging force? You would yourself have rather wished for, than approved of, a greater facility on our part, for the brave cannot love the timid. We knew the number of your troops, we had discovered the famine in your camp, we were aware of the paucity of your ships, we had

¹ "Otra larga y muy elegante oracion directiva a desviar me de mi | propuesto," &c. Parma to Philip II, MS. just cited.

heard of the quarrels in your army, we were expecting daily to hear of a general mutiny among your soldiers. Were we to believe that with ten or eleven thousand men you would be able to block up the city by land and water, to reduce the open country of Brabant, to cut off all aid as well from the neighbouring towns as from the powerful provinces of Holland and Zeeland, to oppose, without a navy, the whole strength of our fleets, directed against the dyke? Truly, if you had been at the head of fifty thousand soldiers, and every soldier had possessed one hundred hands, it would have seemed impossible for you to meet so many emergencies in so many places, and under so many distractions. What you have done we now believe possible to do, only because we see that it has been done. You have subjugated the Scheldt, and forced it to bear its bridge, notwithstanding the strength of its current, the fury of the ocean-tides, the tremendous power of the icebergs, the perpetual conflicts with our fleets. We destroyed your bridge, with great slaughter of your troops. Rendered more courageous by that slaughter, you restored that mighty work. We assaulted the great dyke, pierced it through and through, and opened a path for our ships. You drove us off when victors, repaired the ruined bulwark, and again closed to us the avenue of relief. What machine was there that we did not employ? what miracles of fire did we not invent? what fleets and floating citadels did we not put in motion? All that genius, audacity, and art, could teach us we have executed, calling to our assistance water, earth, heaven, and hell itself. Yet with all these efforts, with all this enginry, we have not only failed to drive you from our walls, but we have seen you gaining victories over other cities at the same time. You have done a thing, O Prince, than which there is nothing greater either in ancient or modern story. It has often occurred, while a general was besieging one city that he lost another situate farther off. But you, while besieging Antwerp, have reduced simultaneously Dendermonde, Ghent, Nymegen, Brussels, and Mechlin.”¹

¹ The oration is reported by Strada of Farnese's papers than will probably
II., 374-376, who had access to more ever be in the possession of any other

All this, and much more, with florid rhetoric, the burgo-master pronounced in honour of Farnese, and the eulogy was entirely deserved. It was hardly becoming, however, for such lips, at such a moment, to sound the praise of him whose victory had just decided the downfall of religious liberty, and of the national independence of the Netherlands. His colleagues certainly must have winced, as they listened to commendations so lavishly bestowed upon the representative of Philip, and it is not surprising that Sainte Aldegonde's growing unpopularity should, from that hour, have rapidly increased. To abandon the whole object of the siege, when resistance seemed hopeless, was perhaps pardonable, but to offer such lip-homage to the conqueror was surely transgressing the bounds of decorum.

His conclusion, too, might to Alexander seem as insolent as the whole tenor of his address had been humble; for, after pronouncing this solemn eulogy upon the conqueror, he calmly proposed that the prize of the contest should be transferred to the conquered.

"So long as liberty of religion, and immunity from citadel and garrison can be relied upon," he said, "so long will Antwerp remain the most splendid and flourishing city in Christendom; but desolation will ensue if the contrary policy is to prevail."¹

But it was very certain that liberty of religion, as well as immunity from citadel and garrison, were quite out of the question. Philip and Parma had long been inexorably resolved upon all the three points.

"After the burgomaster had finished his oration," wrote Alexander to his sovereign, "I discussed the matter with him in private, very distinctly and minutely."²

writer. It is possible that the harangue is indebted for some of its declamatory exuberance to the imagination of the historian; but I have found the Jesuit, in general, very accurate in transcribing and translating the diplomatic documents relating to his hero. A circumstantial account of this parti-

cular interview between the Prince and Marnix, with a full report of this oration by the latter, is not among the Simancas MSS.; and I have therefore relied upon Strada.

¹ Ibid.

² MS. Letter of 25 Aug. 1685, before cited.

The religious point was soon given up, Sainte Aldegonde finding it waste of breath to say anything more about freedom of conscience. A suggestion was however made on the subject of the garrison, which the prince accepted, because it contained a condition which it would be easy to evade.

"Aldegonde proposed," said Parma, "that a garrison might be admissible if I made my entrance into the city merely with infantry and cavalry of nations which were acceptable—Wal-loons, namely, and Germans—and in no greater numbers than sufficient for a body-guard. I accepted, because, in substance, this would amount to a garrison, and because, also, after the magistrates shall have been changed, I shall have no difficulty in making myself master of the people, continuing the garrison, and rebuilding the citadel."¹

The Prince proceeded to give his reasons why he was willing to accept the capitulation on what he considered so favourable terms to the besieged. Autumn was approaching. Already the fury of the storms had driven vessels clean over the dykes; the rebels in Holland and Zeeland were preparing their fleets—augmented by many new ships of war and fire-machines—for another desperate attack upon the Palisades, in which there was great possibility of their succeeding; an auxiliary force from England was soon expected; so that, in view of all these circumstances, he had resolved to throw himself at his Majesty's feet and implore his clemency. "If this people of Antwerp, as the head, is gained," said he, "there will be tranquillity in all the members."²

These reasons were certainly conclusive; nor is it easy to believe, that, under the circumstances thus succinctly stated by Alexander, it would have been impossible for the patriots to hold out until the promised succour from Holland and from England should arrive. In point of fact, the bridge could not have stood the winter which actually ensued; for it was the repeatedly expressed opinion of the Spanish officers in

¹ MS. Letter of 25 Aug. 1585, before cited.

² "Y pues de la que se usase con este pueblo, como cabeza, ha de resultar bien y tranquilidad a los miembros que restan," &c. (Ibid.)

Antwerp, that the icebergs which then filled the Scheldt must inevitably have shattered twenty bridges to fragments, had there been so many.¹ It certainly was superfluous for the Prince to make excuses to Philip for accepting the proposed capitulation. All the prizes of victory had been thoroughly secured, unless pillage, massacre, and rape, which had been the regular accompaniments of Alva's victories, were to be reckoned among the indispensable trophies of a Spanish triumph.

Nevertheless, the dearth in the city had been well concealed from the enemy ; for, three days after the surrender, not a loaf of bread was to be had for any money in all Antwerp, and Alexander declared that he would never have granted such easy conditions had he been aware of the real condition of affairs.²

The articles of capitulation agreed upon between Parma and the deputies were brought before the broad council on the 9th August. There was much opposition to them, as many magistrates and other influential personages entertained sanguine expectations from the English negotiation, and were beginning to rely with confidence upon the promises of Queen Elizabeth. The debate was waxing warm, when some of the councillors, looking out of window of the great hall, perceived that a violent mob had collected in the streets.³ Furious cries for bread were uttered, and some meagre-looking individuals were thrust forward to indicate the famine which was prevailing, and the necessity of concluding the treaty without further delay. Thus the municipal government was perpetually exposed to democratic violence, excited by diametrically opposite influences. Sometimes the burgomaster was denounced for having sold himself and his country to the Spaniards, and was assailed with execrations for being willing to conclude a sudden and disgraceful peace.⁴ At other moments he was accused of forging letters containing promises of succour from the Queen of England and from the authori-

¹ *Le Petit*, II. 502.

² *Meteren*, XII. 225.

³ *Le Petit*, II. 518.

⁴ *Bor*, II. 609.

ties of Holland, in order to protract the lingering tortures of the war.¹ Upon this occasion the peace-mob carried its point. The councillors, looking out of window, rushed into the hall with direful accounts of the popular ferocity; the magistrates and colonels who had been warmest in opposition suddenly changed their tone, and the whole body of the broad council accepted the articles of capitulation by a unanimous vote.²

The window was instantly thrown open, and the decision publicly announced. The populace, wild with delight, rushed through the streets, tearing down the arms of the Duke of Anjou, which had remained above the public edifices since the period of that personage's temporary residence in the Netherlands, and substituting, with wonderful celerity, the escutcheon of Philip the Second.³ Thus suddenly could an Antwerp mob pass from democratic insolence to intense loyalty.

The articles, on the whole, were as liberal as could have been expected. The only hope for Antwerp and for a great commonwealth of all the Netherlands was in holding out, even to the last gasp, until England and Holland, now united, had time to relieve the city. This was, unquestionably, possible. Had Antwerp possessed the spirit of Leyden, had William of Orange been alive, that Spanish escutcheon, now raised with such indecent haste, might have never been seen again on the outside wall of any Netherland edifice. Belgium would have become at once a constituent portion of a great independent national realm, instead of languishing until our own century, the dependency of a distant and a foreign metropolis. Nevertheless, as the Antwerpers were not disposed to make themselves martyrs, it was something that they escaped the nameless horrors which had often alighted upon cities subjected to an enraged soldiery. It redounds to the eternal honour of Alexander Farnese—when the fate of Naarden and Haarlem and Maestricht, in the days of Alva, and of Antwerp itself in the horrible “Spanish fury,” is remembered—that there were no scenes of violence and outrage

¹ Bentivoglio, P. II. L. III. 292.

² Le Petit, *ubi sup.*

³ Ibid.

in the populous and wealthy city, which was at length at his mercy after having defied him so long.

Civil and religious liberty were trampled in the dust, commerce and manufactures were destroyed, the most valuable portion of the citizens sent into hopeless exile, but the remaining inhabitants were not butchered in cold blood.

The treaty was signed on the 17th August. Antwerp was to return to its obedience. There was to be an entire amnesty and oblivion for the past, without a single exception. Royalist absentees were to be reinstated in their possessions. Monasteries, churches, and the King's domains were to be restored to their former proprietors. The inhabitants of the city were to practise nothing but the Catholic religion. Those who refused to conform were allowed to remain two years for the purpose of winding up their affairs and selling out their property, provided that during that period they lived "without scandal towards the ancient religion"—a very vague and unsatisfactory condition. All prisoners were to be released excepting Teligny. Four hundred thousand florins were to be paid by the authorities as a fine. The patriot garrison was to leave the city with arms and baggage and all the honours of war.¹

This capitulation gave more satisfaction to the hungry portion of the Antwerpers than to the patriot party of the Netherlands. Sainte Aldegonde was vehemently and unsparingly denounced as a venal traitor. It is certain, whatever his motives, that his attitude had completely changed. For it was not Antwerp alone that he had reconciled or was endeavouring to reconcile with the King of Spain, but Holland and Zeeland as well, and all the other independent Provinces. The ancient champion of the patriot army, the earliest signer of the 'Compromise,' the bosom friend of William the Silent, the author of the 'Wilhelmus' national song, now avowed his conviction, in a published defence of his conduct against the

¹ Bor, II. 610-613. Hooft Vervolgh, 11-116. Strada, II. 378-383. Compare, for the history of the siege, which he calls "the most memorable in the world," Herrera, 'Hist. Gen. del Mun-

da,' P. II., L. xiv., Cap. 13-16, and L. XV., C. 1-4 ss. 28, 29. See also De Thou, IX., L. 80, and 81. Bentivoglio, P. II. L. III.; and the authorities previously cited.

calumnious attacks upon it, "that it was impossible, with a clear conscience, for subjects, under any circumstances, to take up arms against Philip, their king."¹ Certainly if he had always entertained that opinion he must have suffered many pangs of remorse during his twenty years of active and illustrious rebellion. He now made himself secretly active in promoting the schemes of Parma and in counteracting the negotiation with England. He flattered himself, with an infatuation which it is difficult to comprehend, that it would be possible to obtain religious liberty for the revolting Provinces, although he had consented to its sacrifice in Antwerp. It is true that he had not the privilege of reading Philip's secret letters to Parma, but what was there in the character of the King—what intimation had ever been given by the Governor-General—to induce a belief in even the possibility of such a concession?

Whatever Sainte Aldegonde's opinions, it is certain that Philip had no intention of changing his own policy. He at first suspected the burgomaster of a wish to protract the negotiations for a perfidious purpose.

"Necessity has forced Antwerp," he wrote on the 17th of August—the very day on which the capitulation was actually signed—"to enter into negotiation. I understand the artifice of Aldegonde in seeking to prolong and make difficult the whole affair, under pretext of treating for the reduction of Holland and Zeeland at the same time. It was therefore very adroit in you to defeat this joint scheme at once, and urge the Antwerp matter by itself, at the same time not shutting the door on the others. With the prudence and dexterity with which this business has thus far been managed I am thoroughly satisfied."²

¹ Strada, II. 379.

² "Bien se vé que necesidad ha forzado Amberes a las plasticas de concierto que andan, y el artificio de Aldegonde en haber tentado dilatar el negocio, so color de tratar la reducion de Holanda y Zelanda juntamente, y así fué muy acertado desbaratarle este

intento, y apretarle en lo que de Amberes, de casi no cerrando la puerta a lo demas, y de la cordura y destreza con que todo esto se ha guiado, quedo muy enterado y satisfecho." Philip II. to Parma, 17 Aug. 1585, Arch. de Sim. MS.

The King also expressed his gratification at hearing from Parma that the demand for religious liberty in the Netherlands would soon be abandoned.

"In spite of the vehemence," he said, "which they manifest in the religious matter, desiring some kind of liberty, they will in the end, as you say they will, content themselves with what the other cities, which have returned to obedience, have obtained. *This must be done in all cases without flinching, and without permitting any modification.*"¹

What "had been obtained" by Brussels, Mechlin, Ghent, was well known. The heretics had obtained the choice of renouncing their religion or of going into perpetual exile, and this was to be the case "without flinching" in Holland and Zeeland, if those provinces chose to return to obedience. Yet Sainte Aldegonde deluded himself with the thought of a religious peace.

In another and very important letter of the same date Philip laid down his policy very distinctly. The Prince of Parma, by no means such a bigot as his master, had hinted at the possibility of tolerating the reformed religion in the places recovered from the rebels, *sub silentio*, for a period not defined, and long enough for the heretics to awake from their errors.

"You have got an expression of opinion, I see," wrote the King to Alexander, "of some grave men of wisdom and conscience, that the limitation of time, during which the heretics may live without scandal, may be left undefined; but I feel very keenly the danger of such a proposition. With regard to Holland and Zeeland, or any other provinces or towns, the first step must be for them to receive and maintain *alone* the exercise of the Catholic religion, and to subject themselves to the Roman church, without tolerating the exercise of any other religion, in city, village, farm-house, or building

¹ "Que por mas dureza que muestran en lo de la religion, deseando alguna libertad, al cabo se reduciran á contentarse en esta parte con lo que las otras villas que han venido a la

obediencia, porque esto se ha de hacer así en todo caso, sin aflojar, ni permitir otra cosa en ninguna manera." Philip to Parma, 17 Aug., MS. just cited.

thereto destined in the fields, or in any place whatsoever ; and in this regulation there is to be no flaw, no change, no concession by convention or otherwise of a religious peace, or anything of the sort. They are all to embrace the Roman Catholic religion, and the exercise of that is alone to be permitted."¹

This certainly was distinct enough, and nothing had been ever said in public to induce a belief in any modification of the principles on which Philip had uniformly acted. That monarch considered himself born to suppress heresy, and he had certainly been carrying out this work during his whole lifetime.

The King was willing, however, as Alexander had intimated in his negotiations with Antwerp, and previously in the capitulation of Brussels, Ghent, and other places, that there should be an absence of investigation into the private chambers of the heretics, during the period allotted them for choosing between the Papacy and exile.

"It may be permitted," said Philip, "to abstain from inquiring as to what the heretics are doing within their own doors, in a private way, without scandal, or any public exhibition of their rites *during a fixed time*. But this connivance, and the abstaining from executing the heretics, or from chastising them, even although they may be living very circumspectly, is to be expressed in very vague terms."

Being most anxious to provide against a second crop of heretics to succeed the first, which he was determined to

¹ "Con todo sentiera yo mucho ver esta tolerancia sin limite. Ha de ser el primo paso recibir y tener solamente el ejercicio catolico, y sujetarse á la obediencia de la Yglesia Romana, sin tolerar ni consentir por via de capitulacion otro ningun ejercicio en ninguna villa, ni granja, ni parte destinada para el en el campo ni dentro en los lugares . . . y quanto á esto no ha de haber quiebra ni mudanza ni concederles por concierto ninguna libertad de consciencias, ni religions-fried, ni otra cosa semejante, sino que abracen la Cat^a Rom^a con

solo el ejercicio della," &c. Philip II. to Parma, 17 Aug. 1585. Archivo de Simancas MS.

² "Mas bien se podra debaxo desto no inquirir lo que los hereges hicieron dentro de sus casas y los unos en las de los otros en forma privada y sin escandalo, ni muestra de ejercicio publico de sus sectas y errores durante el dicho tiempo, porque esta dissimulacion, y no los egecutar ni castiga: aunque en lo del mal exemplo viven menos recatados que debrian ha de ser en forma bien larga." (Ibid.)

uproot, he took pains to enjoin with his own hand upon Parma the necessity of putting in Catholic schoolmasters and mistresses to the exclusion of reformed teachers into all the seminaries of the recovered Provinces, in order that all the boys and girls might grow up in thorough orthodoxy.¹

Yet this was the man from whom Sainte Aldegonde imagined the possibility of obtaining a religious peace.

Ten days after the capitulation, Parma made his triumphal entrance into Antwerp; but, according to his agreement, he spared the citizens the presence of the Spanish and Italian soldiers, the military procession being composed of the Germans and Walloons. Escorted by his body-guard, and surrounded by a knot of magnates and veterans, among whom the Duke of Arschot, the Prince of Chimay, the Counts Mansfeld, Egmont, and Aremberg, were conspicuous, Alexander proceeded towards the captured city. He was met at the Keyser Gate by a triumphal chariot of gorgeous workmanship, in which sat the fair nymph Antwerpia, magnificently bedizened, and accompanied by a group of beautiful maidens. Antwerpia welcomed the conqueror with a kiss, recited a poem in his honour, and bestowed upon him the keys of the city, one of which was in gold. This the Prince immediately fastened to the chain around his neck, from which was suspended the lamb of the golden fleece, with which order he had just been, amid great pomp and ceremony, invested.

On the public square called the Mere, the Genoese merchants had erected two rostral columns, each surmounted by a colossal image, representing respectively Alexander of Macedon and Alexander of Parma. Before the house of Portugal was an enormous phoenix, expanding her wings quite across the street; while, in other parts of the town, the procession was met by ships of war, elephants, dromedaries, whales, dragons, and other triumphal phenomena. In the market-place were seven statues in copper, personifying the seven planets, together with an eighth representing Bacchus; and perhaps there were good mythological reasons why the

¹ Philip II. to Parma, MS. just cited.

god of wine, together with so large a portion of our solar system, should be done in copper by Jacob Jongeling, to honour the triumph of Alexander, although the key to the enigma has been lost.¹

The cathedral had been thoroughly fumigated with frankincense, and besprinkled with holy water, to purify the sacred precincts from their recent pollution by the reformed rites ; and the Protestant pulpits which had been placed there, had been soundly beaten with rods, and then burned to ashes.² The procession entered within its walls, where a magnificent 'Te Deum' was performed, and then, after much cannon-firing, bell-ringing, torch-light exhibition, and other pyrotechnics, the Prince made his way at last to the palace provided for him. The glittering display, by which the royalists celebrated their triumph, lasted three days' long, the city being thronged from all the country round with eager and frivolous spectators, who were never wearied with examining the wonders of the bridge and the forts, and with gazing at the tragic memorials which still remained of the fight on the Kowenstyn.

During this interval, the Spanish and Italian soldiery, not willing to be outdone in demonstrations of respect to their chief, nor defrauded of their rightful claim to a holiday, amused themselves with preparing a demonstration of a novel character. The bridge, which, as it was well known, was to be destroyed within a very few days, was adorned with triumphal arches, and decked with trees and flowering plants ; its roadway was strewed with branches ; and the palisades, parapets, and forts, were garnished with wreaths, emblems, and poetical inscriptions in honour of the Prince. The soldiers themselves, attired in verdurous garments of foliage and flower-work, their swart faces adorned with roses and lilies, paraded the bridge and the dyke in fantastic procession with clash of cymbal and flourish of trumpet, dancing, singing, and discharging their carbines, in all the delirium of triumph. Nor was a suitable termination to the

¹ Bor, II. 622. Hoofd Vervolg, | XII. 225. Mertens and Torfs V. 258.
117. Strada, II. 383, seq. Meteren, ² Le Petit II. 519.

festival wanting, for Alexander, pleased with the genial character of these demonstrations, repaired himself to the bridge, where he was received with shouts of rapture by his army, thus whimsically converted into a horde of fauns and satyrs. Afterwards, a magnificent banquet was served to the soldiers upon the bridge. The whole extent of its surface, from the Flemish to the Brabant shore—the scene so lately of deadly combat, and of the midnight havoc caused by infernal enginery—was changed, as if by the stroke of a wand, into a picture of sylvan and Arcadian merry-making, and spread with tables laden with delicate viands. Here sat that host of war-bronzed figures, banqueting at their ease, their heads crowned with flowers, while the highest magnates of the army, humouring them in their masquerade, served them with dainties, and filled their goblets with wine.¹

After these festivities had been concluded, Parma set himself to practical business. There had been a great opposition, during the discussion of the articles of capitulation to the reconstruction of the famous citadel. That fortress had been always considered, not as a defence of the place against a foreign enemy, but as an instrument to curb the burghers themselves beneath a hostile power. The city magistrates, however, as well as the dean and chief officers in all the guilds and fraternities, were at once changed by Parma—Catholics being uniformly substituted for heretics.² In consequence, it was not difficult to bring about a change of opinion in the broad council. It is true that neither Papists nor Calvinists regarded with much satisfaction the prospect of military violence being substituted for civic rule, but in the first effusion of loyalty, and in the triumph of the ancient religion, they forgot the absolute ruin to which their own action was now condemning their city. Champagny, who had once covered himself with glory by his heroic though unsuccessful efforts to save Antwerp from the dreadful “Spanish fury” which had descended from that very citadel,

¹ Strada, II. 387.

² Parma to Philip II., 30 Sept., 1585,

Archivo de Simancas MS. Same to same, 11 Nov. 1585. (Ibid.)

was now appointed governor of the town, and devoted himself to the reconstruction of the hated fortress. "Champagny has particularly aided me," wrote Parma, "with his rhetoric and clever management, and has brought the broad council itself to propose that the citadel should be rebuilt. It will therefore be done, as by the burghers themselves, without your Majesty or myself appearing to desire it."¹

This was, in truth, a triumph of "rhetoric and clever management," nor could a city well abase itself more completely, kneeling thus cheerfully at its conqueror's feet, and requesting permission to put the yoke upon its own neck. "The erection of the castle has thus been determined upon," said Parma, "and I am supposed to know nothing of the resolution."²

A little later he observed that they were "working away most furiously at the citadel, and that within a month it would be stronger than it ever had been before."³

The building went on, indeed, with astonishing celerity, the fortress rising out of its ruins almost as rapidly, under the hands of the royalists, as it had been demolished, but a few years before, by the patriots. The old foundations still remained, and blocks of houses, which had been constructed out of its ruins, were thrown down that the materials might be again employed in its restoration.⁴

The citizens, impoverished and wretched, humbly demanded that the expense of building the citadel might be in part defrayed by the four hundred thousand florins in which they had been mulcted by the capitulation. "I don't marvel at this," said Parma, "for certainly the poor city is *most forlorn and poverty-stricken, the heretics having all left it*."⁵ It was not long before it was very satisfactorily established, that the presence of those same heretics and liberty of conscience for

¹ MS. Letter of 11 Nov. 1585, before cited. "Rhetorica y buena maña," &c.

² MS. Letter, 30 Sept., 1585, before cited.

³ Letter of 11 Nov. 1585.

⁴ Strada, II. 394.

⁵ "Pues es cierto está la pobre villa pobrissima y alcanzadissima, habiendola dejado los hereges," &c. MS. letter last cited.

all men, were indispensable conditions for the prosperity of the great capital. Its downfall was instantaneous. The merchants and industrious artisans all wandered away from the place which had been the seat of a world-wide traffic. Civilisation and commerce departed, and in their stead were the citadel and the Jesuits. By express command of Philip, that order, banished so recently, was reinstated in Antwerp, as well as throughout the obedient provinces; and all the schools and colleges were placed under its especial care. No children could be thenceforth instructed except by the lips of those fathers.¹ Here was a curb more efficacious even than the citadel. That fortress was at first garrisoned with Walloons and Germans. "I have not yet induced the citizens," said Parma, "to accept a Spanish garrison, nor am I surprised; so many of them remembering past events (alluding to the 'Spanish fury,' but not mentioning it by name), and observing the frequent mutinies at the present time. Before long, I expect, however, to make the Spaniards as acceptable and agreeable as the inhabitants of the country themselves."²

It may easily be supposed that Philip was pleased with the triumphs that had thus been achieved. He was even grateful, or affected to be grateful, to him who had achieved them. He awarded great praise to Alexander for his exertions, on the memorable occasions of the attack upon the bridge, and the battle of the Kowenstyn; but censured him affectionately for so rashly exposing his life. "I have no words," he said, "to render the thanks which are merited for all that you have been doing. I recommend you earnestly however to have a care for the security of your person, for that is of more consequence than all the rest."³

After the news of the reduction of the city, he again expressed gratification, but in rather cold language. "From such obstinate people," said he, "not more could be extracted than has been extracted; therefore the capitulation is satis-

¹ Strada, II. 389.

² MS. Letter, 11 Nov., 1585.

³ "Ya yo no sé palabras con que daros las gracias que merece todo lo que ahí haceis, y así no dire sino que

os encomiendo mucho que mireis por la seguridad de vuestra persona, pues en esta va mas que en todo." Philip II. to Parma, 5 July, 1585. Arch. de Sim. MS.

factory.”¹ What more he wished to extract it would be difficult to say, for certainly the marrow had been extracted from the bones, and the dead city was thenceforth left to moulder under the blight of a foreign garrison and an army of Jesuits. “Perhaps religious affairs will improve before long,”² said Philip. They did improve very soon, as he understood the meaning of improvement. A solitude of religion soon brought with it a solitude in every other regard, and Antwerp became a desert, as Sainte Aldegonde had foretold would be the case.

The King had been by no means so calm, however, when the intelligence of the capitulation first reached him at Madrid. On the contrary, his oldest courtiers had never seen him exhibit such marks of hilarity.

When he first heard of the glorious victory at Lepanto, his countenance had remained impassive, and he had continued in the chapel at the devotional exercises which the messenger from Don John had interrupted. Only when the news of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew first reached him, had he displayed an amount of cheerfulness equal to that which he manifested at the fall of Antwerp. “Never,” said Granvelle, “had the King been so radiant with joy as when he held in his hand the despatches which announced the capitulation.”³ The letters were brought to him after he had retired to rest, but his delight was so great that he could not remain in his bed. Rushing from his chamber, so soon as he had read them, to that of his dearly-beloved daughter, Clara Isabella, he knocked loudly at the door, and screaming through the keyhole the three words, “Antwerp is ours,” returned precipitately again to his own apartment.⁴

It was the general opinion in Spain, that the capture of this city had terminated the resistance of the Netherlands. Holland and Zeeland would, it was thought, accept with very little hesitation the terms which Parma had been offering, through the agency of Sainte Aldegonde; and, with the

¹ “Sacar mas que lo que se ha sacado,” &c. Philip to Parma, 5 Sept., 1585. Arch. de Sim. MS.

² Ibid.

³ Strada, II. 338, 339.

⁴ Ibid.

reduction of those two provinces, the Spanish dominion over the whole country would of course become absolute. Secretary Idiaquez observed, on drawing up instructions for Carlo Coloma, a Spanish financier then departing on special mission for the Provinces, that he would soon come back to Spain, for the Prince of Parma was just putting an end to the whole Belgic war.¹

Time was to show whether Holland and Zeeland were as malleable as Antwerp, and whether there would not be a battle or two more to fight before that Belgic war would come to its end. Meantime Antwerp was securely fettered, while the spirit of commerce—to which its unexampled prosperity had been due—now took its flight to the lands where civil and religious liberty had found a home.

NOTE ON MARNIX DE SAINTE ALDEGONDE.

As every illustration of the career and character of this eminent personage excites constant interest in the Netherlands, I have here thrown together, in the form of an Appendix, many important and entirely unpublished details, drawn mainly from the Archives of Simancas, and from the State Paper Office and British Museum in London.

The ex-burgomaster seemed determined to counteract the policy of those Netherlanders who wished to offer the sovereignty of the Provinces to the English Queen. He had been earnestly in favour of annexation to France, for his sympathies and feelings were eminently French. He had never been a friend to England, and he was soon aware that a strong feeling of indignation—whether just or unjust—existed against him both in that country and in the Netherlands, on account of the surrender of Antwerp.

“I have had large conference with Villiers,” wrote Sir John Norris to Walsingham, “he condemneth Ste. Aldegonde’s doings, but will impute it to fear and not to malice. Ste. Aldegonde, notwithstanding that he was forbidden to come to Holland, and laid for at the fleet, yet stole secretly to Dort, where they say he

¹ Strada, II. 389.

is staid, but I doubt he will be heard speak, and then assuredly he will do great hurt."

It was most certainly Sainte Aldegonde's determination, so soon as the capitulation of Antwerp had been resolved upon, to do his utmost to restore all the independent Provinces to their ancient allegiance. Rather Spanish than English was his settled resolution. Liberty of religion, if possible—that was his cherished wish—but still more ardently, perhaps, did he desire to prevent the country from falling into the hands of Elizabeth.

"The Prince of Parma hath conceived such an assured hope of the fidelity of Aldegonde," wrote one of Walsingham's agents, Richard Tomson, "in reducing the Provinces, yet enemies, into a perfect subjection, that the Spaniards are so well persuaded of the man as if he had never been against them. They say, about the middle of this month, he departed for Zeeland and Holland, to prosecute the effect of his promises, and I am the more induced to believe that he is become altogether Spanish, for that the common bruit goeth that he hastened the surrendering of the town of Antwerp, after he had intelligence of the coming of the English succours."

There was naturally much indignation felt in the independent Provinces, against all who had been thought instrumental in bringing about the reduction of the great cities of Flanders. Famars, governor of Mechlin, Van den Tympel, governor of Brussels, Martini, who had been active in effecting the capitulation of Antwerp, were all arrested in Holland. "From all that I can hear," said Parma, "it is likely that they will be very severely handled, which is the reason why Ste. Aldegonde, although he sent his wife and children to Holland, has not ventured thither himself. It appears that they threaten him there, but he means now to go, under pretext of demanding to justify himself from the imputations against him. Although he tells me freely that, without some amplification of the concessions hitherto made on the point of religion, he hopes for no good result, yet I trust that he will do good offices in the meantime, in spite of the difficulties which obstruct his efforts. On my part, every exertion will be made, and not without hope of some fruit, if not before, at least after, these people have become as tired of the English as they were of the French."

• Sir John Norreys to Walsingham, 29th August, 1585 (o.s.) S. P. Office, M.S.
Aug. 24 (O.S.), 1585. S. P. Office

MS. • Parma to Philip II. Arch. de
• Richard Tomson to Sir F. Wal- Sim. MS.

Of this mutual ill-feeling between the English and the burgomaster, there can be no doubt whatever. The Queen's government was fully aware of his efforts to counteract its negotiation with the Netherlands, and to bring about their reconciliation with Spain. When the Earl of Leicester—as will soon be related—arrived in the Provinces, he was not long in comprehending his attitude and his influence.

"I wrote somewhat of Sir Aldegonde in putting his case," wrote Leicester, "but this is certain, I have the copy of his very letters sent hither to practise the peace not two days before I came, and this day one hath told me that loves him well, that he hates our countrymen unrecoverably. I am sorry for it."

On the other hand, the Queen was very indignant with the man whom she looked upon as the paid agent of Spain. She considered him a renegade, the more dangerous because his previous services had been so illustrious. "Her Majesty's dislike towards Ste. Aldegonde continueth," wrote Walsingham to Leicester, "and she taketh offence that he was not restrained of his liberty by your Lordship's order." It is unquestionable that the ex-burgomaster intended to do his best towards effecting the reconciliation of all the Provinces with Spain; and it is equally certain that the King had offered to pay him well, if he proved successful in his endeavours. There is no proof, however, and no probability that Sainte Aldegonde ever accepted or ever intended to accept the proffered bribe. On the contrary, his whole recorded career ought to disprove the supposition. Yet it is painful to find him, at this crisis, assiduous in his attempts to undo the great work of his own life, and still more distressing to find that great rewards were distinctly offered to him for such service. Immense promises had been frequently made no doubt to William the Silent; nor could any public man, in such times, be so pure that an attempt to tamper with him might not be made: but when the personage, thus solicited, was evidently acting in the interests of the tempters, it is not surprising that he should become the object of grave suspicion.

"It does not seem to me bad," wrote Philip to Parma, "this negotiation which you have commenced with Ste. Aldegonde, in order to gain him, and thus to employ his services in bringing about a reduction of the islands (Holland and Zeeland). In

¹ 'Correspondence of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, in the years 1585 and 1586, edited by John Bruce.' Printed for the Camden Society, 1844.

p. 27, 28, ¹⁵/₂₀ Dec. 1585.

² 'Leicester's Correspondence,' by Bruce p. 36, Dec. 1585.

exchange for this work, any thing which you think proper to offer to him as a reward, will be capital well invested; but it must not be given until the job is done.”¹

But the job was hard to do, and Sainte Aldegonde cared nothing for the offered bribe. He was, however, most strangely confident of being able to overcome, on the one hand, the opposition of Holland and Zeeland to the hated authority of Spain, and, on the other, the intense abhorrence entertained by Philip to liberty of conscience.

Soon after the capitulation, he applied for a passport to visit those two Provinces. Permission to come was refused him. Honest men from Antwerp, he was informed, would be always welcome, but there was no room for him.² There was, however—or Parma persuaded himself that there was—a considerable party in those countries in favour of reconciliation with Spain. If the ex-burgomaster could gain a hearing, it was thought probable that his eloquence would prove very effective.

“We have been making efforts to bring about negotiations with Holland and Zeeland,” wrote Alexander to Philip. “Gelderland and Overijssel likewise show signs of good disposition, but I have not soldiers enough to animate the good and terrify the bad. As for Holland and Zeeland, there is a strong inclination on the part of the people to a reconciliation, if some concession could be made on the religious question, but the governors oppose it, because they are perverse, and are relying on assistance from England. Could this religious concession be made, an arrangement could, without doubt, be accomplished, and more quickly than people think. Nevertheless, in such a delicate matter, I am obliged to await your Majesty’s exact instructions and ultimatum.”³

He then proceeded to define exactly the position and intentions of the burgomaster.

“The government of Holland and Zeeland,” he said, “have refused a passport to Ste. Aldegonde, and express dissatisfaction with him for having surrendered Antwerp so soon. They know that he has much credit with the people and with the ministers of the sects, and they are in much fear of him because he is inclined for peace, which is against their interests. They are,

¹ — “que a trueque dello sera bien empleado lo que vieredes que combendra ofrecelle para darselo despues de hecho el efecto.”—Philip II. to Parma, 5th Sept. 1585. Arch. de

Sim. MS.

² Bor, II. 614–620. Hoofd Vervolgh, 116.

³ Parma to Philip II. 30th Sept. 1585. Arch. de Sim. MS.

therefore, endeavouring to counteract my negotiations with him. These have been, thus far, only in general terms. I have sought to induce him to perform the offices required, without giving him reason to expect any concession as to the exercise of religion. *He persuades himself that, in the end, there will be some satisfaction obtained upon this point*, and, under this impression he considers the peace as good as concluded, there remaining no doubt as to other matters. He has sent his wife to Zeeland, and is himself going to Germany, where, as he says, he will do all the good service that he can. He hopes that very shortly the Provinces will not only invite, but implore him to come to them; in which case, he promises me to perform miracles.”¹

Alexander then proceeded to pay a distinct tribute to Sainte Aldegonde's motives; and, when it is remembered that the statement thus made is contained in a secret despatch, in cipher, to the King, it may be assumed to convey the sincere opinion of the man most qualified to judge correctly as to this calumniated person's character.

“Ste. Aldegonde offers me wonders,” he said, “and I have promised him that he shall be recompensed very largely; yet, although he is poor, I do not find him influenced by mercenary or selfish considerations, but only very set in opinions regarding his religion.”²

The Prince had however no doubt of Sainte Aldegonde's sincerity, for sincerity was a leading characteristic of the man. His word, once given, was sacred, and he had given his word to do his best towards effecting a reconciliation of the Provinces with Spain, and frustrating the efforts of England. “Through the agency of Ste. Aldegonde and that of others,” wrote Parma, “I shall watch, day and night, to bring about a reduction of Holland and Zeeland, if humanly possible. I am quite persuaded that they will soon be sick of the English, who are now arriving, broken down, without arms or money, and obviously incapable of holding out very long. Doubtless, however, this English alliance, and the determination of the Queen to do her utmost against us, complicates matters, and assists the government of Holland and Zeeland in opposing the inclinations of their people.”³

Nothing ever came of these intended negotiations. The

¹ Parma to Philip II., 30 Sept., MS. just cited.

² — “en el cual caso ofrece maravillas, como le he ofrecido yo de que será recompensado muy largamente,

aunque si bien es pobre no le veo interesado, mas tan solamente puesto en la opinion de su religion.” Ibid.

³ Ibid.

miracles were never wrought, and even had Sainte Aldegonde been as venal as he was suspected of being—which we have thus proof positive that he was not—he never could have obtained the recompense, which, according to Philip's thrifty policy, was not to be paid until it had been earned. Sainte Aldegonde's hands were clean. It is pity that we cannot render the same tribute to his political consistency of character. It is also certain that he remained—not without reason—for a long time under a cloud. He became the object of unbounded and reckless calumny. Antwerp had fallen, and the necessary consequence of its reduction was the complete and permanent prostration of its commerce and manufactures. These were transferred to the new, free, national, independent, and prosperous commonwealth that had risen in the "islands" which Parma and Sainte Aldegonde had vainly hoped to restore to their ancient servitude. In a very few years after the subjugation of Antwerp, it appeared by statistical documents that nearly all the manufactures of linen, coarse and fine cloths, serges, fustians, tapestry, gold embroidery, arras-work, silks, and velvets, had been transplanted to the towns of Holland and Zeeland, which were flourishing and thriving, while the Flemish and Brabantine cities had become mere dens of thieves and beggars. It was in the mistaken hope of averting this catastrophe—as melancholy as it was inevitable—and in despair of seeing all the Netherlands united, unless united in slavery, and in deep-rooted distrust of the designs and policy of England, that this statesman, once so distinguished, had listened to the insidious tongue of Parma. He had sought to effect a general reconciliation with Spain, and the only result of his efforts was a blight upon his own illustrious name.

He published a defence of his conduct, and a detailed account of the famous siege. His apology, at the time, was not considered conclusive, but his narrative remains one of the clearest and most trustworthy sources for the history of these important transactions. He was never brought to trial, but he discovered, with bitterness, that he had committed a fatal error, and that his political influence had passed away. He addressed numerous private epistles to eminent persons, indignantly denying the imputations against his character, and demanding an investigation. Among other letters he observed in one to Count Hohenlo, that he was astonished and grieved to find that all his faithful labours and sufferings in the cause of his fatherland had been forgotten in an hour. In place of praise and gratitude, he had reaped nothing but censure and calumny; because men ever

judged, not by the merits, but by the issue. That common people should be so unjust, he said, was not to be wondered at, but of men like Hohenlo he had hoped better things. He asserted that he had saved Antwerp from another "Spanish fury," and from impending destruction—a city in which there was not a single regular soldier, and in which his personal authority was so slight that he was unable to count the number of his masters. If a man had ever performed a service to his country, he claimed to have done so in this capitulation. Nevertheless, he declared that he was the same Philip Marnix, earnestly devoted to the service of God, the true religion, and the fatherland; although he avowed himself weary of the war, and of this perpetual offering of the Netherland sovereignty to foreign potentates. He was now going, he said, to his estates in Zeeland; there to turn farmer again; renouncing public affairs, in the administration of which he had experienced so much ingratitude from his countrymen.¹ Count Maurice and the States of Holland and Zeeland wrote to him, however, in very plain language, describing the public indignation as so strong as to make it unsafe for him to visit the country.²

The Netherlands and England—so soon as they were united in policy—were, not without reason, indignant with the man who had made such strenuous efforts to prevent that union. The English were, in truth, deeply offended. He had systematically opposed their schemes, and to his prejudice against their country, and distrust of their intentions, they attributed the fall of Antwerp. Envoy Davison, after his return to Holland, on the conclusion of the English treaty, at once expressed his suspicions of the ex-burgomaster, and the great dangers to be apprehended from his presence in the free States. "Here is some working underhand," said he to Walsingham, "to draw hither Sainte Aldegonde, under a pretext of his justification, which—as it has hitherto been denied him—so is the sequel suspected, if he should obtain it before they were well settled here, betwixt her Majesty and them, considering the manifold presumptions that the subject of his journey should be little profitable or advantageous to the state of these poor countries, as tending, at the best, to the propounding of some general reconciliation."³ It was certainly not without substantial grounds that the English and Hollanders, after concluding their articles of alliance, felt uneasy

¹ Bor, II. 614.

² Ibid.

³ Davison to Walsingham, Sept. $\frac{4}{14}$ 1585 S. P. Office MS.

at the possibility of finding their plans reversed by the intrigues of a man whom they knew to be a mediator between Spain and her revolted Provinces, and whom they suspected of being a venal agent of the Catholic King. It was given out that Philip had been induced to promise liberty of religion, in case of reconciliation. We have seen that Parma was at heart in favour of such a course, and that he was very desirous of inducing Marnix to believe in the possibility of obtaining such a boon, however certain the Prince had been made by the King's secret letters, that such a belief was a delusion. "Martini hath been examined," wrote Davison, "who confesseth both for himself and others, to be come hither by direction of the Prince of Parma and intelligence of Sainte Aldegonde, from whom he was first addressed by Villiers and afterwards to others for advice and assistance. That the scope of this direction was to induce them here to hearken to a peace, wherein the Prince of Parma promiseth them toleration of religion, although he confesseth yet to have no absolute power in that behalf, but hath written thereof to the King expressly, and *holdeth himself assured thereof by the first post*, as I have likewise been advertised from Rowland York, which if it had been propounded openly here before things had been concluded with her Majesty, and order taken for her assurance, your honour can judge what confusion it must of necessity have brought forth."¹

At last, when Marnix had become convinced that the toleration would not arrive "by the very next mail from Spain," and that, in truth, such a blessing was not to be expected through the post-office at all, he felt an inward consciousness of the mistake which he had committed. Too credulously had he inclined his ear to the voice of Parma; too obstinately had he steeled his heart against Elizabeth, and he was now the more anxious to clear himself at least from the charges of corruption so clamorously made against him by Holland and by England. Conscious of no fault more censurable than credulity and prejudice, feeling that his long fidelity to the reformed religion ought to be a defence for him against his calumniators, he was desirous both to clear his own honour, and to do at least a tardy justice to England. He felt confident that loyal natures, like those of Davison and his colleagues at home, would recognize his own loyalty. He trusted, not without cause, to English honour, and coming to his manor-house of Zoubourg, near Flushing, he

¹ Davison to Walsingham, Sept. 1585.

addressed a letter to the ambassador of Elizabeth, in which the strong desire to vindicate his aspersed integrity is quite manifest.

"I am very joyous," said he, "that coming hither in order to justify myself against the false and malignant imputations with which they charge me, I have learned your arrival here on the part of her Majesty, as well as the soon expected coming of the Earl of Leicester. I see, in truth, that the Lord God is just, and never abandons his own. I have never spared myself in the service of my country, and I would have sacrificed my life, a thousand times, had it been possible, in her cause. Now, I am receiving for all this a guerdon of blame and calumny, which is cast upon me in order to cover up faults which have been committed by others in past days. I hope, however, to come soon to give you welcome, and to speak more particularly to you of all these things. Meantime demanding my justification before these gentlemen, who ought to have known me better than to have added faith to such villanous imputations, I will entreat you that my definite justification, or condemnation,—if I have merited it,—may be reserved till the arrival of Lord Leicester."¹

¹ Sainte Aldegonde to Davison, Oct. 30 1585, S. P. Office MS. (The letter is in French.)

Walsingham always entertained a high opinion of Sainte Aldegonde's integrity. "Je pourrois à bon droit estre taxé," wrote Marnix, in answer to a letter from Sir Francis, "ou de stupidité, ou d'ingratitude—d'autant plus qu' en une commune opinion, mesmes de ceux qui estoient plus proches tesmoins de mes actions, et avoyent plus de commodité d'en pouvoir juger à la verité, si ils en eussent prendre la peine il vous a pleu, en estant beaucoup plus esloigné, et plus environné de préjugés, maintenir constamment l'impression qu' aviez une fois conceue de mon intégrété. * * * Et pleut à Dieu que j'eusse peu avoir gens de qualité et de jugement tels qu' est V. S. ou spectateurs, ou juges de mes conseils et procédures. Je m'assure qu' en lieu de blâme, que, ou les ignorans ou les malicieux m'ont mis sus, j'en eusse rapporté louange et gloire. Tant y a que rends graces encore pour ce jour d'huy à mon Dieu, de ce qu' en ces grandes extremités, environnées de tant de difficultés, il ne

m'a onques si avant privé de son esprit, que je n'aye toujours eu mon seul but et la gloire de son nom et la conservation de ses eglises. Ce que je vous prie de croire, et vous assure qu'en cette resolution je desire vivre et mourir." Marnix de Sainte Aldegonde to Walsingham, May ⁶/₁₆, 1586, from Zoubourg. S. P. Office MS.

"The Count Maurice," wrote envoy and counsellor Wilkes, a year later, from Utrecht, "is loved and respected here of the people, for the merits of his late father; and is (so far as I can judge) like to succeed him in wisdom and sufficiency. I cannot discern that there is any doubt to be had of him, that he should be led away by any persuasion to seek his advancement but by her Majesty; and Sainte Aldegonde, *contrary to the opinion conceived of him by her Majesty, is noted here of all men to be a good patriot, and worthy to be employed in the services here, in respect of his ability and wisdom, howbeit I perceive (to take away the offence that may be mustered to her Majesty) they are contented to forbear the use of his services.*" Wilkes to the Lords of Council, 20th Aug. 1586, S. P. Office MS.

This certainly was not the language of a culprit. Nevertheless, his words did not immediately make a deep impression on the hearts of those who heard him. He had come secretly to his house at Zoubourg, having previously published his memorable apology; and in accordance with the wishes of the English government, he was immediately confined to his own house. Confidence in the intention of a statesman, who had at least committed such grave errors of judgment, and who had been so deeply suspected of darker faults, was not likely very soon to revive. So far from shrinking from an investigation which would have been dangerous, even to his life, had the charges against his honour been founded in fact, he boldly demanded to be confronted with his accusers, in order that he might explain his conduct before all the world. "Sir, yesternight, at the shutting of the gates," wrote Davison to Walsingham,—transmitting the little note from Marnix, which has just been cited—"I was advertised that Ste. Aldegonde was not an hour before secretly landed at the head on the other side the Rammekens, and come to his house at Zoubourg, having prepared his way by an apology, newly published in his defence, whereof I have as yet recovered one only copy, which herewith I send your honour. This day, whilst I was at dinner, he sent his son unto me, with a few lines, whereof I send you the copy, advertising me of his arrival (which he knew I understood before), together with the desire he had to see me, and speak with me, if the States, before whom he was to come to purge himself of the crimes wherewith he stood, as he saith, unjustly charged, would vouchsafe him so much liberty. The same morning, the council of Zeeland, taking knowledge of his arrival, sent unto him the pensioner of Middelburgh and this town, to sound the causes of his coming, and to will him, in their behalf, to keep his house, and to forbear all meddling by word or writing, with any whatsoever, till they should further advise and determine in his cause. In defence thereof, he fell into large and particular discourse with the deputies, accusing his enemies of malice and untruth, offering himself to any trial, and to abide what punishment the laws should lay upon him, if he were found guilty of the crimes imputed to him. Touching the cause of his coming, he pretended and protested that he had no other end than his simple justification, preferring any hazard he might incur thereby, to his honour and good fame."¹ As to the great question at issue,

¹ Davison to Walsingham, Nov. $\frac{1}{11}$ 1585. (S. P. Office, MS.)

Marnix had at last become conscious that he had been a victim to Spanish dissimulation, and that Alexander Farnese was in reality quite powerless to make that concession of religious liberty, without which a reconciliation between Holland and Philip was impossible. "Whereas," said Davison, "it was supposed that Ste. Aldegonde had commission from the Prince of Parma to make some offer of peace, he assured them of the contrary as a thing which neither the Prince had any power to yield unto with the surety of religion, or himself would, in conscience, persuade without it; with a number of other particularities in his excuse; amongst the rest, allowing and commending in his speech, the course they had taken with her Majesty, as the only safe way of deliverance for these afflicted countries—letting them understand how much the news thereof—specially since the entry of our garrison into this place (which before they would in no sort believe), hath troubled the enemy, who doth what he may to suppress the bruit thereof, and yet comforteth himself with the hope that between the factions and partialities nourished by his industry, and musters among the towns, especially in Holland and Zeeland (where he is persuaded to find some pliable to a reconcilment,) and the disorders and misgovernment of our people, there will be yet occasion offered him to make his profit and advantage. I find that the gentleman hath here many friends indifferently persuaded of his innocency, notwithstanding the closing up of his apology doth make but little for him. Howsoever it be, it falleth out the better that the treaty with her Majesty is finished, and the cautionary towns assured before his coming, which, if he be ill affected, will I hope either reform his judgment or restrain his will. I will not forget to do the best I can to sift and decipher him yet more narrowly and particularly."¹

Thus, while the scales had at length fallen from the eyes of Marnix, it was not strange that the confidence which he now began to entertain in the policy of England, should not be met, at the outset, with a corresponding sentiment on the part of the statesman by whom that policy was regulated. "Howsoever Ste. Aldegonde would seem to purge himself," said Davison, "it is suspected that his end is dangerous. I have done what *I may to restrain him, so nevertheless as it may not seem to come from me.*" And again—"Ste. Aldegonde," he wrote, "continueth still our neighbor at his house between this and Middelburg,

¹ Davison to Walsingham, MS. just cited.

² Ibid.

yet unmolested. He findeth many favourers, and, I fear, doth no good offices. He desireth to be reserved till the coming of my Lord of Leicester, before whom he pretends a desired trial.”¹

This covert demeanour on the part of the ambassador was in accordance with the wishes of his government. It was thought necessary that Sainte Aldegonde should be kept under arrest until the arrival of the Earl, but deemed preferable that the restraint should proceed from the action of the States rather than from the order of the Queen. Davison was fulfilling orders in attempting, by underhand means, to deprive Marnix, for a time, of his liberty. “Let him, I pray you, remain in good safety in any wise,”² wrote Leicester, who was uneasy at the thought of so influential, and, as he thought, so ill-affected a person being at large, but at the same time disposed to look dispassionately upon his past conduct, and to do justice, according to the results of an investigation. “It is thought meet,” wrote Walsingham to Davison, “that you should do your best endeavour to procure that Ste. Aldegonde may be restrained, which in mine opinion were fit to be handled in such sort, as the restraint might rather proceed from themselves than by your solicitation. And yet rather than he should remain at liberty to practise underhand, whereof you seem to stand in great doubt, it is thought meet that you should make yourself a partizan, to seek by all the means that you may to have him restrained under the guard of some well affected patriot until the Earl’s coming, at what time his cause may receive examination.”³

This was, however, a result somewhat difficult to accomplish; for twenty years of noble service in the cause of liberty had not been utterly in vain, and there were many magnanimous spirits to sympathize with a great man struggling thus in the meshes of calumny. That the man who challenged rather than shunned investigation, should be thrown into prison, as if he were a detected felon upon the point of absconding, seemed a heartless and superfluous precaution. Yet Davison and others still feared the man whom they felt obliged to regard as a baffled intriguer. “Touching the restraint of Ste. Aldegonde,” wrote Davison to Lord Burghley, “which I had order from Mr. Secretary to procure underhand, I find the difficulty will be

¹ Davison to ———, Nov. $\frac{11}{21}$ 1585, S. P. Office MS.
 S. P. Office MS. ² Minute of Walsingham, Nov. $\frac{19}{29}$
³ Leicester to Davison, Nov. $\frac{10}{20}$ 1585, 1585, S. P. Office MS.

great in regard of his many friends and favourers, preoccupied with some opinion of his innocence, although I have travailed with divers of them underhand, and am promised that some order shall be taken in that behalf, which I think will be harder to execute as long as Count Maurice is here. For Ste. Aldegonde's affection, I find continual matter to suspect it inclined to a peace, and that as one notably prejudging our scope and proceeding in this cause, doth lie in wait for an occasion to set it forward, being, as it seems, fed with a hope of 'telle quelle liberté de conscience,' which the Prince of Parma and others of his council have, as he confesseth, earnestly solicited at the King's hands. This appeareth, in truth, the only apt and easy way for them to prevail both against religion and the liberty of these poor countries, having thereby once recovered the authority which must necessarily follow a peace, to renew and alter the magistrates of the particular towns, which, being at their devotion, may turn, as we say, all upside down, and so in an instant being under their servitude, if not wholly, at the least in a great part of the country, leaving so much the less to do about the rest, a thing confessed and looked for of all men of any judgment here, if the drift of our peace-makers may take effect."¹

Sainte Aldegonde had been cured of his suspicions of England, and at last the purity of his own character shone through the mists.

One winter's morning, two days after Christmas, 1585, Colonel Morgan, an ingenuous Welshman, whom we have seen doing much hard fighting on Kowenstyn Dyke, and at other places, and who now commanded the garrison at Flushing, was taking a walk outside the gates, and inhaling the salt breezes from the ocean. While thus engaged he met a gentleman coming along, staff in hand, at a brisk pace towards the town, who soon proved to be no other than the distinguished and deeply suspected Sainte Aldegonde. The two got at once into conversation. "He began," said Morgan, "by cunning insinuations, to wade into matters of state, and at the last fell to touching the principal points, to wit, her Majesty's entrance into the cause now in hand, which, quoth he, was an action of high importance, considering how much it behoved her to go through the same, as well in regard of the hope that thereby was given to the distressed people of these parts, as also in consideration of that worthy personage whom she hath here placed, whose estate and credit may not be suffered

¹ Davison to Burghley, ^{Nov. 29}
Dec. 9 1585, S. P. Office MS.

to quail, but must be upholden as becometh the lieutenant of such a princess as her Majesty."¹

"The opportunity thus offered," continued honest Morgan, "and the way opened by himself, I thought good to discourse with him to the full, partly to see the end and drift of his induced talk, and consequently to touch his quick in the suspected cause of Antwerp." And thus, word for word, taken down faithfully the same day, proceeded the dialogue that wintry morning, near three centuries ago. From that simple record—mouldering unseen and unthought of for ages, beneath piles of official dust—the forms of the illustrious Fleming and the bold Welsh colonel, seem to start, for a brief moment, out of the three hundred years of sleep which have succeeded their energetic existence upon earth. And so, with the bleak winds of December whistling over the breakers of the North Sea, the two discoursed together, as they paced along the coast.

Morgan.—"I charge you with your want of confidence in her Majesty's promised aid. 'Twas a thing of no small moment had it been embraced when it was first most graciously offered."

Sainte Aldegonde.—"I left not her prince-like purpose unknown to the States, who too coldly and carelessly passed over the benefit thereof, until it was too late to put the same in practice. For my own part, I acknowledge that indeed I thought some further advice would either alter or at least detract from the accomplishment of her determination. I thought this the rather because she had so long been wedded to peace, and I supposed it impossible to divorce her from so sweet a spouse. But, set it down that she were resolute, yet the sickness of Antwerp was so dangerous, as it was to be doubted the patient would be dead before the physician could come. I protest that the state of the town was much worse than was known to any but myself and some few private persons. The want of victuals was far greater than they durst bewray, fearing lest the common people, perceiving the plague of famine to be at hand, would rather grow desperate than patiently expect some happy event. For as they were many in number, so were they wonderfully divided: some being Martinists, some Papists, some neither the one nor the other, but generally given to be factious, so that the horror at home was equal to the hazard abroad."

Morgan.—"But you forget the motion made by the martial

¹ Sir Thomas Morgan to Sir F. Walsingham, Jan. $\frac{1}{11}$, 1585, S. P. Office MS.

² *Ibid.*

men for putting out of the town such as were simple artificers, with women and children, mouths that consumed meat, but stood in no stead for defence."

Sainte Aldegonde.—"Alas, alas! would you have had me guilty of the slaughter of so many innocents, whose lives were committed to my charge, as well as the best? Or might I have answered my God when those massacred creatures should have stood up against me, that the hope of Antwerp's deliverance was purchased with the blood of so many simple souls? No, no.—I should have found my conscience such a hell and continual worm as the gnawing thereof would have been more painful and bitter than the possession of the whole world would have been pleasant."

Morgan continued to press the various points which had created suspicion as to the character and motives of Marnix, and point by point Marnix answered his antagonist, impressing him, armed as he had been in distrust, with an irresistible conviction as to the loftiness of the nature which had been so much calumniated.

Sainte Aldegonde (with vehemence).—"I do assure you, in conclusion, that I have solemnly vowed service and duty to her Majesty, which I am ready to perform where and when it may best like her to use the same. I will add moreover that I have oftentimes determined to pass into England to make my own purgation, yet fearing lest her Highness would dislike so bold a resolution, I have checked that purpose with a resolution to tarry the Lord's leisure, until some better opportunity might answer my desire. For since I know not how I stand in her grace, unwilling I am to attempt her presence without permission; but might it please her to command my attendance, I should not only most joyfully accomplish the same, but also satisfy her of and in all such matters as I stand charged with, and afterwards spend life, land, and goods, to witness my duty towards her Highness."

Morgan.—"I tell you plainly, that if you are in heart the same man that you seem outwardly to be, I doubt not but her Majesty might easily be persuaded to conceive a gracious opinion of you. For mine own part, I will surely advertise Sir Francis Walsingham of as much matter as this present conference hath ministered.

"Hereof," said the Colonel—when, according to his promise, faithfully recording the conversation in all its details for Mr. Secretary's benefit,—“he seemed not only content but most

glad. Therefore I beseech your honour to vouchsafe some few lines herein, that I may return him some part of your mind. I have already written thereof to Sir Philip Sidney, lord governor of Flushing, with request that his Excellency the Earl of Leicester may presently be made acquainted with the cause."

Indeed the brave Welshman was thoroughly converted from his suspicions by the earnest language and sympathetic presence of the fallen statesman. This result of the conference was creditable to the ingenuous character of both personages.

"Thus did he," wrote Morgan to Sir Francis, "from point to point answer all objections from the first to the last, and that in such sound and substantial manner, with a strong show of truth, as I think his very enemies, having heard his tale, would be satisfied. And truly, Sir, as heretofore I have thought hardly of him, being led by a superficial judgment of things as they stood in outward appearance; so now, having pierced deep, and weighed causes by a sounder and more deliberate consideration, I find myself somewhat changed in conceit—not so much carried away by the sweetness of his speech, as confirmed by the force of his religious profession, wherein he remaineth constant, without wavering—an argument of great strength to set him free from treacherous attempts; but as I am herein least able and most unworthy to yield any censure, much less to give advice, so I leave the man and the matter to your honour's opinion. Only (your graver judgment reserved) thus I think, that it were good either to employ him as a friend, or as an enemy to remove him farther from us, being a man of such action as the world knoweth he is. And to conclude," added Morgan, "this was the upshot between us."¹

Nevertheless, he remained in this obscurity for a long period.² When, towards the close of the year 1585, the English government was established in Holland, he was the object of constant suspicion.

"Here is Aldegonde," wrote Sir Philip Sidney to Lord Leicester from Flushing, "a man greatly suspected, but by no man charged. He lives restrained to his own house, and for aught I can find, deals with nothing, only desiring to have his cause wholly referred to your Lordship, and therefore, with the best heed I can to his proceedings, I will leave him to his clearing or condemning, when your Lordship shall hear him."³

¹ Thomas Morgan to Sir F. Walsingham, 116, 117. Wagenaar, viii. 83, 84. ham, MS. just cited.

² Sir P. Sidney to Earl of Leicester,

³ Bor., II. 610-614. Hoofd Ver- Brit. Mus. Galba. C. viii. 213. MS.

In another letter, Sir Philip again spoke of Sainte Aldegonde as "one of whom he kept a good opinion, and yet a suspicious eye."¹

Leicester himself was excessively anxious on the subject, deeply fearing the designs of a man whom he deemed so mischievous, and being earnestly desirous that he should not elude the chastisement which he seemed to deserve.

"Touching Ste. Aldegonde," he wrote to Davison, "I grieve that he is at his house without good guard. I do earnestly pray you to move such as have power presently to commit a guard about him, for I know he is a dangerous and a bold man, and presumes yet to carry all, for he hath made many promises to the Prince of Parma. I would he were in Fort Rammekyns, or else that Mr. Russell had charge of him, with a recommendation from me to Russell to look well to him till I shall arrive. You must have been so commanded in this from her Majesty, for she thinks he is in close and safe guard. If he is not, look for a turn of all things, for he hath friends, I know."²

But very soon after his arrival, the Earl, on examining into the matter, saw fit to change his opinions and his language. Persuaded, in spite of his previous convictions, even as the honest Welsh colonel had been, of the upright character of the man, and feeling sure that a change had come over the feelings of Marnix himself in regard to the English alliance, Leicester at once interested himself in removing the prejudices entertained towards him by the Queen.

"Now a few words for Ste. Aldegonde," said he in his earliest despatches from Holland; "I will beseech her Majesty to stay her judgment till I write next. If the man be as he now seemeth, it were pity to lose him, for he is indeed marvellously friended. Her Majesty will think, I know, that I am easily pacified or led in such a matter, but I trust so to deal as she shall give me thanks. Once if he do offer service it is sure enough, for *he is esteemed that way above all the men in this country for his word, if he give it*. His worst enemies here procure me to win him, for sure, just matter for his life there is none. He would fain come into England, so far is he come already, and doth extol her Majesty for this work of hers to heaven, and confesseth, till now an angel could not make him believe it."³

¹ Sir P. Sidney to Earl of Leicester, 19th Feb. 1586. Brit. Mus. Galba. C. ix. p. 93.

² Leicester to Davison, Nov. ¹⁸/₂₈ 1585. S. P. Office MS.

³ Bruce, 'Leycest. Corresp.' p. 33, 34.

Here certainly was a noble tribute paid unconsciously, as it were, to the character of the maligned statesman. "Above all the men in the country for his word, if he give it." What wonder that Orange had leaned upon him, that Alexander had sought to gain him, and how much does it add to our bitter regret that his prejudices against England should not have been removed until too late for Antwerp and for his own usefulness. Had his good angel really been present to make him believe in that "work of her Majesty," when his ear was open to the seductions of Parma, the destiny of Belgium and his own subsequent career might have been more fortunate than they became.

The Queen was slow to return from her prejudices. She believed—not without reason—that the opposition of Ste. Aldegonde to her policy had been disastrous to the cause both of England and the Netherlands; and it had been her desire that he should be imprisoned, and tried for his life. Her councillors came gradually to take a more favourable view of the case, and to be moved by the pathetic attitude of the man who had once been so conspicuous.

"I did acquaint Sir Christopher Hatton," wrote Walsingham to Leicester, "with the letter which Ste. Aldegonde wrote to your Lordship, which, carrying a true picture of an afflicted mind, cannot but move an honest heart, weighing the rare parts the gentleman is endowed withal, to pity his distressed estate, and to procure him relief and comfort, which Mr. Vice-Chamberlain (Hatton) hath promised on his part to perform. I thought good to send Ste. Aldegonde's letter unto the Lord Treasurer (Burghley), who heretofore has carried a hard conceit of the gentleman, hoping that the view of his letter will breed some remorse towards him. I have also prayed his Lordship, if he see cause, to acquaint her Majesty with the said letter."

But his high public career was closed. He lived down calumny, and put his enemies to shame, but the fatal error which he had committed, in taking the side of Spain rather than of England at so momentous a crisis, could never be repaired. He regained the good opinion of the most virtuous and eminent personages in Europe, but in the noon of life he voluntarily withdrew from public affairs. The circumstances just detailed had made him impossible as a political leader, and it was equally impossible for him to play a secondary part. He occasionally consented to be

¹ Bruce, 'Leycest. Corresp.' pp. 31, 34.

employed in special diplomatic missions, but the serious avocations of his life now became theological and literary. He sought—in his own words—to penetrate himself still more deeply than ever with the spirit of the reformation, and to imbue the minds of the young with that deep love for the reformed religion which had been the guiding thought of his own career. He often spoke with a sigh of his compulsory exile from the field where he had been so conspicuous all his lifetime; he bitterly lamented the vanished dream of the great national union between Belgium and Holland, which had flattered his youth and his manhood; and he sometimes alluded with bitterness to the calumny which had crippled him of his usefulness. He might have played a distinguished part in that powerful commonwealth which was so steadily and splendidly arising out of the lagunes of Zeeland and Holland, but destiny and calumny and his own error had decided otherwise.

“From the depth of my exile—” he said, “for I am resolved to retire, I know not where, into Germany, perhaps into Sarmatia, I shall look from afar upon the calamities of my country. That which to me is most mournful is no longer to be able to assist my fatherland by my counsels and my actions.” He did not go into exile, but remained chiefly at his mansion of Zoubourg, occupied with agriculture and with profound study. Many noble works conspicuous in the literature of the epoch—were the results of his learned leisure; and the name of Marnix of Sainte Aldegonde will be always as dear to the lovers of science and letters as to the believers in civil and religious liberty. At the request of the States of Holland he undertook, in 1593, a translation of the Scriptures from the original, and he was at the same time deeply engaged with a History of Christianity, which he intended for his literary master-piece. The man whose sword had done knightly service on many a battle-field for freedom, whose tongue had controlled mobs and senates, courts and councils, whose subtle spirit had metamorphosed itself into a thousand shapes to do battle with the genius of tyranny, now quenched the feverish agitation of his youth and manhood in Hebrew and classical lore. A grand and noble figure always: most pathetic when thus redeeming by vigorous but solitary and melancholy hard labor, the political error which had condemned him to retirement. To work, ever to work, was the primary law of his nature. Repose in the other world, “Repos ailleurs” was the device which he assumed in earliest youth, and to which he was faithful all his days.

A great and good man whose life had been brim-full of noble

¹ Commentaire sur les Affaires d'Anvers.

deeds, and who had been led astray from the path, not of virtue, but of sound policy, by his own prejudices and by the fascination of an intellect even more brilliant than his own, he at least enjoyed in his retirement whatever good may come from hearty and genuine labor, and from the high regard entertained for him by the noblest spirits among his contemporaries.

"They tell me," said La Noue, "that the Seigneur de Ste. Aldegonde has been suspected by the Hollanders and the English. I am deeply grieved, for 'tis a personage worthy to be employed. I have always known him to be a zealous friend of his religion and his country, and I will bear him this testimony, *that his hands and his heart are clean*. Had it been otherwise, I must have known it. His example has made me regret the less the promise I was obliged to make, never to bear arms again in the Netherlands. For I have thought that since this man, who has so much credit and authority among your people, after having done his duty well, has not failed to be calumniated and ejected from service, what would they have done with me, who am a stranger, had I continued in their employment? The consul Terentius Varro lost, by his fault, the battle of Cannæ; nevertheless, when he returned to Rome, offering the remainder of his life in the cause of his Republic reduced to extremity, he was not rejected, but well received, because he hoped well for the country. It is not to be imputed as blame to Ste. Aldegonde that he lost Antwerp, for he surrendered when it could not be saved. What I now say is drawn from me by the compassion I feel when persons of merit suffer without cause at the hands of their fellow citizens. In these terrible tempests, as it is a duty rigorously to punish the betrayers of their country, even so it is an obligation upon us to honor good patriots, and to support them in venial errors, that we may all encourage each other to do the right."¹

Strange too as it may now seem to us, a reconciliation of the Netherlands with Philip was not thought an impossibility by other experienced and sagacious patriots, besides Marnix. Even Olden-Barneveld, on taking office as Holland's Advocate, at this period, made it a condition that his service was to last only until the reunion of the Provinces with Spain.²

There was another illustrious personage in a foreign land who ever rendered homage to the character of the retired Netherland statesman. Amid the desolation of France, Duplessis Mornay often solaced himself by distant communion with that kindred and sympathizing spirit.

¹ Groen v. Prinsterer, 'Archives,' &c. I. 79, 80.

² Willems, 'Mengelingen,' p. 389.

"Plunged in public annoyances," he wrote to Sainte Aldegonde, "I find no consolation, except in conference with the good, and among the good I hold you for one of the best. With such men I had rather sigh profoundly than laugh heartily with others. In particular, Sir, do me the honor to love me, and believe that I honor you singularly. Impart to me something from your solitude, for I consider your deserts to be more fruitful and fertile than our most cultivated habitations. As for me, think of me as of a man drowning in the anxieties of the time, but desirous, if possible, of swimming to solitude."¹

Thus solitary, yet thus befriended,—remote from public employment, yet ever employed, doing his daily work with all his soul and strength, Marnix passed the fifteen years yet remaining to him. Death surprised him at last, at Leyden, in the year 1598, while steadily laboring upon his Flemish translation of the Old Testament, and upon the great political, theological, controversial, and satirical work on the differences of religion, which remains the most stately, though unfinished, monument of his literary genius. At the age of sixty he went at last to the repose which he had denied to himself on earth. "Repos ailleurs."²

¹ "Memoires and Corresp. de Du-plessis Mornay," vi. 35.

² I am bound to state that there is a single passage in one of Parma's letters to Philip, which contains a somewhat suspicious allusion to Marnix. Were it not for the distinct assertion of Farnese, already cited, to the disinterested character of the burgomaster, and to his elevation above mercenary considerations, the observation now alluded to would be still more painful.

Six months after the fall of Antwerp, the Prince informed his sovereign that Sainte Aldegonde had not yet gone to Germany, but was still in Zealand, where they were treating him with great attention, but conferring no authority upon him. "Those in power," added Farnese, "distrust him, because they see him inclined to that party, to which, when he can—unless I deceive myself—he will give his support. If he had not found the English already introduced, I think they would have made less of him, and that he would have accomplished some valuable piece of service. I do not fail to send compliments, as well to him, as to others who may prove use-

ful agents, and to do all I can to keep them in their good dispositions, and in this course I shall ever persist, keeping awake by day and night."

"Desconfiando per verle inclinado a la parte a la cual quando puede, sino me engaño, creo ayudará, y sino hablará introducidos los Ingleses, creo hecharen menos de el, y que hiciera algun buen efecto. Yo asi a el, como a los demas medios que me parecen ser a proposito, no dejo de embiar recaudos,* ni de procurar tenerlos en su buen proposito, y en la dicha conformidad lo hiro, haciendo siempre, desvelandome de dia y de noche," &c., &c. Parma to Philip II. 28th Feb., 1586. Archivo de Simancas MS.

* The word "recaudo" or "recado" means a complimentary message, which might or might not, be accompanied with more solid arguments.

It has been seen that Philip authorized Farnese to offer large rewards to Marnix, with the stipulation that they were not to be conferred until the service required had been rendered. On the other hand, the Prince privately assured the King that the man whom they so much wished to gain, was not to be won by a bribe. After scrupulously examining the evidence, I can not resist a conclusion favourable to the purity of Marnix.

CHAPTER VI.

Policy of England—Diplomatic Coquetry—Dutch Envoys in England—Conference of Ortel and Walsingham—Interview with Leicester—Private Audience of the Queen—Letters of the States-General—Ill Effects of Gilpin's Despatch—Close Bargaining of the Queen and States—Guarantees required by England—England's comparative Weakness—The English characterised—Paul Hentzner—The Envoys in London—Their Characters—Olden-Barneveldt described—Reception at Greenwich—Speech of Menin—Reply of the Queen—Memorial of the Envoys—Discussions with the Ministers—Second Speech of the Queen—Third Speech of the Queen—Sir John Norris sent to Holland—Parsimony of Elizabeth—Energy of Davison—Protracted Negotiations—Friendly Sentiments of Count Maurice—Letters from him and Louisa de Coligny—Davison vexed by the Queen's Caprice—Dissatisfaction of Leicester—His vehement Complaints—The Queen's Avarice—Perplexity of Davison—Manifesto of Elizabeth—Sir Philip Sidney—His Arrival at Flushing.

ENGLAND—as we have seen—had carefully watched the negotiations between France and the Netherlands. Although she had—upon the whole, for that intriguing age—been loyal in her bearing towards both parties, she was perhaps not entirely displeased with the result. As her cherished triumvirate was out of the question, it was quite obvious that, now or never, she must come forward to prevent the Provinces from falling back into the hands of Spain. The future was plainly enough foreshadowed, and it was already probable, in case of a prolonged resistance on the part of Holland, that Philip would undertake the reduction of his rebellious subjects by a preliminary conquest of England. It was therefore quite certain that the expense and danger of assisting the Netherlands must devolve upon herself, but, at the same time it was a consolation that her powerful next-door neighbour was not to be made still more powerful by the annexation to his own dominion of those important territories.

Accordingly, so soon as the deputies in France had received their definite and somewhat ignominious repulse from Henry III. and his mother, the English government lost no time in

intimating to the States that they were not to be left without an ally. Queen Elizabeth was however resolutely averse from assuming that sovereignty which she was not unwilling to see offered for her acceptance ; and her accredited envoy at the Hague, besides other more secret agents, were as busily employed in the spring of 1585—as Des Pruneaux had been the previous winter on the part of France—to bring about an application, by solemn embassy, for her assistance.

There was, however, a difference of view, from the outset, between the leading politicians of the Netherlands and the English Queen. The Hollanders were extremely desirous of becoming her subjects ; for the United States, although they had already formed themselves into an independent republic, were quite ignorant of their latent powers. The leading personages of the country—those who were soon to become the foremost statesmen of the new commonwealth—were already shrinking from the anarchy which was deemed inseparable from a non-regal form of government, and were seeking protection for and against the people under a foreign sceptre. On the other hand, they were indisposed to mortgage large and important fortified towns, such as Flushing, Brill, and others, for the repayment of the subsidies which Elizabeth might be induced to advance. They preferred to pay in sovereignty rather than in money. The Queen, on the contrary, preferred money to sovereignty, and was not at all inclined to sacrifice economy to ambition. Intending to drive a hard bargain with the States, whose cause was her own, and whose demands for aid she had secretly prompted, she meant to grant a certain number of soldiers for as brief a period as possible, serving at her expense, and to take for such outlay a most ample security in the shape of cautionary towns.

Too intelligent a politician not to feel the absolute necessity of at last coming into the field to help the Netherlanders to fight her own battle, she was still willing, for a season longer, to wear the mask of coyness and coquetry, which she thought most adapted to irritate the Netherlanders into a full compliance with her wishes. Her advisers in the Provinces were inclined to take the same view. It seemed obvious, after the

failure in France, that those countries must now become either English or Spanish ; yet Elizabeth, knowing the risk of their falling back, from desperation, into the arms of her rival, allowed them to remain for a season on the edge of destruction—which would probably have been her ruin also—in the hope of bringing them to her feet on her own terms. There was something of feminine art in this policy, and it was not without the success which often attends such insincere manoeuvres. At the same time, as the statesmen of the republic knew that it was the Queen's affair, when so near a neighbour's roof was blazing, they entertained little doubt of ultimately obtaining her alliance. It was pity—in so grave an emergency—that a little frankness could not have been substituted for a good deal of superfluous diplomacy.

Gilpin, a highly intelligent agent of the English government in Zeeland, kept Sir Francis Walsingham thoroughly informed of the sentiments entertained by the people of that Province towards England. Mixing habitually with the most influential politicians, he was able to render material assistance to the English council in the diplomatic game which had been commenced, and on which a no less important stake than the crown of England was to be hazarded.

"In conference," he said, "with particular persons that bear any rule or credit, I find a great inclination towards her Majesty, joined notwithstanding with a kind of coldness. They allege that matters of such importance are to be maturely and thoroughly pondered, while some of them harp upon the old string, as if her Majesty, for the security of her own estate, was to have the more care of their's here."¹

He was also very careful to insinuate the expediency of diplomatic coquetry into the mind of a Princess who needed no such prompting. "The less by outward appearance," said he, "this people shall perceive that her Majesty can be contented to take the protection of them upon her, the forwarder they will be to seek and send unto her, and the larger conditions in treaty may be required. For if they see it to come

¹ Gilpin to Walsingham, ⁶/₁₆ March, 1585. S. P. Office MS.

from herself, then do they persuade themselves that it is for the greater security of our own country and her Highness to fear the King of Spain's greatness. But if they become seekers unto her Majesty, and if they may, by outward show, deem that she accounteth not of the said King's might, but able and sufficient to defend her own realms, then verily I think they may be brought to whatsoever points her Majesty may desire."¹

Certainly it was an age of intrigue, in which nothing seemed worth getting at all unless it could be got by underhand means, and in which it was thought impossible for two parties to a bargain to meet together except as antagonists, who believed that one could not derive a profit from the transaction unless the other had been overreached. This was neither good morality nor sound diplomacy, and the result of such trifling was much loss of time and great disaster. In accordance with this crafty system, the agent expressed the opinion that it would "be good and requisite for the English government somewhat to temporise," and to dally for a season longer, in order to see what measures the States would take to defend themselves, and how much ability and resources they would show for belligerent purposes. If the Queen were too eager, the Provinces would become jealous, "yielding, as it were, their power, and yet keeping the rudder in their own hands."

At the same time Gilpin was favourably impressed with the character both of the country and the nation, soon to be placed in such important relations with England. "This people," he said, "is such as by fair means they will be won to yield and grant any reasonable motion or demand. What these islands of Zeeland are her Majesty and all my lords of her council do know. Yet for their government thus much I must write, that during these troubles it never was better than now. They draw, in a manner, one line, long and carefully in their resolution; but the same once taken and promises made, they would perform them to the uttermost."²

Such then was the character of the people, for no man was better enabled to form an opinion on the subject than was

¹ Gilpin to Walsingham, MS. just cited.

² *Ibid.*

Gilpin. Had it not been as well, then, for Englishmen—who were themselves in that age, as in every other, apt to “perform to the uttermost promises once taken and made,” and to respect those endowed with the same wholesome characteristic—to strike hands at once in a cause which was so vital to both nations?

So soon as the definite refusal of Henry III. was known in England, Leicester and Walsingham wrote at once to the Netherlands. The Earl already saw shining through the distance a brilliant prize for his own ambition, although he was too haughty, perhaps too magnanimous, but certainly far too crafty, to suffer such sentiments as yet to pierce to the surface. “Mr. Davison,” he wrote, “you shall perceive by Mr. Secretary’s letters how the French have dealt with these people. They *are well enough served*; but yet I think, if they will heartily and earnestly seek it, the Lord hath appointed them a far better defence. But you must so use the *matter as that they must seek their own good*, although we shall be partakers thereof also. They may now, if they will effectually and liberally deal, bring themselves to a better end than ever France would have brought them.”¹

At that moment there were two diplomatic agents from the States resident in England—Jacques de Gryze, whom Paul Buys had formerly described as having thrust himself head and shoulders into the matter without proper authority, and Joachim Ortel, a most experienced and intelligent man, speaking and writing English like a native, and thoroughly conversant with English habits and character. So soon as the despatches from France arrived, Walsingham, 18th March, 1585, sent for Ortel, and the two held a long conference.²

¹ Leicester to Davison, ⁸ Mar. 1585. S. P. Office MS.

² *Memorie van Ortel & de Gryze*, 24 March, 1585. Hague Archives MS.

It is necessary, once for all, to state that no personage is ever made, in the text, to say or to write anything except what, upon the best evidence of eye

and ear witnesses, he is known to have said or written. It is no longer permitted to historians—as was formerly the case, from the times of Livy to those of Cardinal Bentivoglio—to *invent* harangues, letters, and conferences. Where my narrative, for the convenience of the reader, is thrown into a dramatic form, the words—not

Walsingham.—“We have just received letters from Lord Derby and Sir Edward Stafford, dated the 13th March. They inform us that your deputies—contrary to all expectation and to the great hopes that had been held out to them—have received, last Sunday, their definite answer from the King of France. He tells them, that, considering the present condition of his kingdom, he is unable to undertake the protection of the Netherlands ; but says that if they like, and if the Queen of England be willing to second his motion, he is disposed to send a mission of mediation to Spain for the purpose of begging the King to take the condition of the provinces to heart, and bringing about some honourable composition, and so forth, and so forth.

“Moreover the King of France has sent Monsieur de Bellievre to Lord Derby and Mr. Stafford, and Bellievre has made those envoys a long oration. He explained to them all about the original treaty between the States and Monsieur, the King's brother, and what had taken place from that day to this, concluding, after many allegations and divers reasons, that the King could not trouble himself with the provinces at present ; but hoped her Majesty would make the best of it, and not be offended with him.

“The ambassadors say further, that they have had an interview with your deputies, who are excessively provoked at this most unexpected answer from the King, and are making loud complaints, being all determined to take themselves off as fast as possible. The ambassadors have recommended that some of the number should come home by the way of England.”

Ortel.—“It seems necessary to take active measures at

the substance merely, but the *ipsissima verba*—have been gathered from authentic documents. Letters, speeches, and the like, are often translated into the text from various languages—Latin, French, Flemish, Spanish, Italian, German, and—where the sources are English—the spelling, and, in a very slight measure, the diction, have been put into modern garb. But the reader may be sure that he is

never made to be present at imaginary conversations, which, however agreeable and instructive in works intentionally fictitious, are quite out of place in those which claim to be historical.

In this instance the account of the conference is derived from the Report made by Envoy Ortel to the States General, preserved in the Royal Archives at the Hague.

once, and to leave no duty undone in this matter. It will be advisable to confer, so soon as may be, with some of the principal counsellors of her Majesty, and recommend to them most earnestly the present condition of the provinces. They know the affectionate confidence which the States entertain towards England, and must now, remembering the sentiments of goodwill which they have expressed towards the Netherlands, be willing to employ their efforts with her Majesty in this emergency."

Walsingham (with much show of vexation).—"This conduct on the part of the French court has been most pernicious. Your envoys have been delayed, fed with idle hopes, and then disgracefully sent away, so that the best part of the year has been consumed, and it will be most difficult now, in a great hurry, to get together a sufficient force of horse and foot folk, with other necessities in abundance. On the contrary, the enemy, *who knew from the first what result was to be expected in France*, has been doing his best to be beforehand with you in the field: add, moreover, that this French negotiation has given other princes a bad taste in their mouths. *This is the case with her Majesty*. The Queen is, not without reason, annoyed that the States have not only despised her friendly and good-hearted offers, but have all along been endeavouring to embark her in this war, for the defence of the Provinces, which would have cost her several millions, without offering to her the slightest security. On the contrary, others, enemies of the religion, who are not to be depended upon—who had never deserved well of the States or assisted them in their need, as she has done—have received this large offer of sovereignty without any reserve whatever."

Ortel (not suffering himself to be disconcerted at this unjust and somewhat insidious attack).—"That which has been transacted with France was not done except with the express approbation and full foreknowledge of her Majesty, so far back as the lifetime of his Excellency (William of Orange), of high and laudable memory. Things had already gone so far, and the Provinces had agreed so entirely together, as to

make it inexpedient to bring about a separation in policy. It was our duty to hold together, and, once for all, thoroughly to understand what the King of France, after such manifold presentations through Monsieur Des Pruneaulx and others, and in various letters of his own, finally intended to do. At the same time, notwithstanding these negotiations, we had always an especial eye upon her Majesty. We felt a hopeful confidence that she would never desert us, leaving us without aid or counsel, but would consider that these affairs do not concern the Provinces alone or even especially, but are just as deeply important to her and to all other princes of the religion."

After this dialogue, with much more conversation of a similar character, the Secretary and the envoy set themselves frankly and manfully to work. It was agreed between them that every effort should be made with the leading members of the Council to induce the Queen "in this terrible conjuncture, not to forsake the Provinces, but to extend good counsel and prompt assistance to them in their present embarrassments."

There was, however, so much business in Parliament just then, that it was impossible to obtain immediately the desired interviews.

On the 20th, Ortel and De Gryze had another interview with Walsingham at the Palace of Greenwich. The Secretary March 20, 1585. expressed the warmest and most sincere affection for the Provinces, and advised that one of the two envoys should set forth at once for home in order to declare to the States, without loss of time, her Majesty's good inclination to assume the protection of the land, together with the maintenance of the reformed religion and the ancient privileges. Not that she was seeking her own profit, or wished to obtain that sovereignty which had just been offered to another of the contrary religion, but in order to make manifest her affectionate solicitude to preserve the Protestant faith and to support her old allies and neighbours. Nevertheless, as she could not assume this protectorate without embarking in a dangerous war with the King of Spain, in which she would not only be obliged to spend the blood of her subjects, but also at least two

millions of gold, there was the more reason that the States should give her certain cities as security. Those cities would be held by certain of her gentlemen, nominated thereto, of quality, credit, and religion, at the head of good, true, and well-paid garrisons, who should make oath never to surrender them to the King of Spain or to any one else without consent of the States. The Provinces were also reciprocally to bind themselves by oath to make no treaty with the King, without the advice and approval of her Majesty. It was likewise thoroughly to be understood that such cautionary towns should be restored to the States so soon as payment should be made of all moneys advanced during the war.

Next day the envoys had an interview with the Earl of Leicester, whom they found as amicably disposed towards their cause as Secretary Walsingham had been. "Her
21st March, 1585. Majesty," said the Earl, "is excessively indignant with the King of France, that he should so long have abused the Provinces, and at last have dismissed their deputies so contemptuously. Nevertheless," he continued, "'tis all your own fault to have placed your hopes so entirely upon him as to entirely forget other princes, and more especially her Majesty. Notwithstanding all that has passed, however, I find her fully determined to maintain the cause of the Provinces. For my own part, I am ready to stake my life, estates, and reputation, upon this issue, and to stand side by side with other gentlemen in persuading her Majesty to do her utmost for the assistance of your country."

He intimated however, as Walsingham had done, that the matter of cautionary towns would prove an indispensable condition, and recommended that one of the two envoys should proceed homeward at once, in order to procure, as speedily as possible, the appointment of an embassy for that purpose to her Majesty. "They must bring full powers," said the Earl, "to give her the necessary guarantees, and make a formal demand for protection; for it would be unbecoming, and against her reputation, to be obliged to present herself, unsought by the other party."

In conclusion, after many strong expressions of good-will, Leicester promised to meet them next day at court, where he would address the Queen personally on the subject, and see that they spoke with her as well. Meantime he sent one of his principal gentlemen to keep company with the envoys, and make himself useful to them. This personage, being "of good quality and a member of Parliament," gave them much useful information, assuring them that there was a strong feeling in England in favour of the Netherlands, and that the matter had been very vigorously taken up in the national legislature. That assembly had been strongly encouraging her Majesty boldly to assume the protectorate, and had manifested a willingness to assist her with the needful. "And if," said he, "one subsidy should not be enough, she shall have three, four, five, or six, or as much as may be necessary."

The same day, the envoys had an interview with Lord Treasurer Burghley, who held the same language as Walsingham and Leicester had done. "The Queen, to his knowledge," he said, "was quite ready to assume the protectorate; but it was necessary that it should be formally offered, with the necessary guarantees, and that without further loss of time."

On the 22nd March, according to agreement, Ortel and De Gryze went to the court at Greenwich. While waiting there for the Queen, who had ridden out into the country, they had more conversation with Walsingham, whom they found even more energetically disposed in their favour than ever, and who assured them that her Majesty was quite ready to assume the protectorate so soon as offered. "Within a month," he said, "after the signing of a treaty, the troops would be on the spot, under command of such a personage of quality and religion as would be highly satisfactory." While they were talking, the Queen rode into the court-yard, accompanied by the Earl of Leicester and other gentlemen. Very soon afterwards the envoys were summoned to her presence, and allowed to recommend the affairs of the Pro-

vinces to her consideration. She lamented the situation of their country, and in a few words expressed her inclination to render assistance, provided the States would manifest full confidence in her. They replied by offering to take instant measures to gratify all her demands, so soon as those demands should be made known; and the Queen finding herself surrounded by so many gentlemen and by a crowd of people, appointed them accordingly to come to her private apartments the same afternoon.

At that interview none were present save Walsingham and Lord Chamberlain Howard. The Queen showed herself "extraordinarily resolute" to take up the affairs of the Provinces. "She had always been sure," she said, "that the French negotiation would have no other issue than the one which they had just seen. She was fully aware what a powerful enemy she was about to make—one who could easily create mischief for her in Scotland and Ireland; but she was nevertheless resolved, if the States chose to deal with her frankly and generously, to take them under her protection. She assured the envoys that if a deputation with full powers and reasonable conditions should be immediately sent to her, she would not delay and dally with them, as had been the case in France, but would despatch them back again at the speediest, and would make her good inclination manifest by deeds as well as words. As she was hazarding her treasure together with the blood and repose of her subjects, she was not at liberty to do this except on receipt of proper securities."¹

Accordingly De Gryze went to the Provinces, provided with complimentary and affectionate letters from the Queen, while Ortel remained in England. So far all was plain and above-board; and Walsingham, who, from the first, had been warmly in favour of taking up the Netherland cause, was relieved by being able to write in straightforward language. Stealthy and subtle, where the object was to get within the guard of an enemy who menaced a mortal blow, he was, both by nature

¹ *Memorie van de Gryze & Ortel. MS. before cited.*

and policy, disposed to deal frankly with those he called his friends.

"Monsieur de Gryze repaireth presently," he wrote to Davison, "to try if he can induce the States to send their deputies hither, furnished with more ample instructions than they had to treat with the French King, considering that her Majesty carryeth another manner of princely disposition than that sovereign. Meanwhile, for that she doubteth lest in this hard estate of their affairs, and the distrust they have conceived to be relieved from hence, they should from despair throw themselves into the course of Spain, her pleasure therefore is—though by Burnham I sent you directions to put them in comfort of relief, *only as of yourself*—that you shall now, as it were, in her name, if you see cause sufficient, assure some of the aptest instruments that you shall make choice of for that purpose, that her Majesty, rather than that they should perish, will be content to take them under her protection."

He added that it was indispensable for the States, upon their part, to offer "such sufficient cautions and assurances as she might in reason demand."¹

Matters were so well managed that by the 22nd April the States-General addressed a letter to the Queen, in which they 22 April, notified her, that the desired deputation was on the 1585. point of setting forth. "Recognizing," they said, "that there is no prince or potentate to whom they are more obliged than they are to your Majesty, we are about to request you very humbly to accept the sovereignty of these Provinces, and the people of the same for your very humble vassals and subjects." They added that, as the necessity of the case was great, they hoped the Queen would send, so soon as might be, a force of four or five thousand men for the purpose of relieving the siege of Antwerp.²

¹ Walsingham to Davison, $\frac{13}{23}$ March, 1585, S. P. Office MS.

² Lettre des Etats Generaux des

Provinces Unies à la serenissime Reyne d'Angleterre, 21 April, 1585. Hague Archives, MS.

A similar letter was despatched by the same courier to the Earl of Leicester.

On the 1st of May, Ortel had audience of the Queen, to deliver the letters from the States-General. He found that

May 1, despatches, very encouraging and agreeable in their

1585. tenor, had also just arrived from Davison. The

Queen was in good humour. She took the letter from Ortel, read it attentively, and paused a good while. Then she assured him that her good affection towards the Provinces was not in the least changed, and that she thanked the States for the confidence in her that they were manifesting. "It is unnecessary," said the Queen, "for me to repeat over and over again sentiments which I have so plainly declared. You are to assure the States that they shall never be disappointed in the trust that they have reposed in my good intentions. Let them deal with me sincerely, and without holding open any back-door. Not that I am seeking the sovereignty of the Provinces, for I wish only to maintain their privileges and ancient liberties, and to defend them in this regard against all the world. Let them ripely consider, then, with what fidelity I am espousing their cause, and how, without fear of any one, I am arousing most powerful enemies."²

Ortel had afterwards an interview with Leicester, in which the Earl assured him that her Majesty had not in the least changed in her sentiments towards the Provinces. "For myself," said he, "I am ready, if her Majesty choose to make use of me, to go over there in person, and to place life, property, and all the assistance I can gain from my friends, upon the issue. Yea, with so good a heart, that I pray the Lord may be good to me, only so far as I serve faithfully in this cause." He added a warning that the deputies to be appointed should come with absolute powers, in order that her Majesty's bountiful intentions might not be retarded by their own fault.³

¹ Lettre des Etats au Ota. de Leicester, 21 April, 1585. Hague Archives, MS.

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² Brief van Ortel aan de Staten Generaal, 8 Mai, 1585. Hague Archives, MS.

³ Ibid.

Ortel then visited Walsingham at his house, Barn-Elms, where he was confined by illness. Sir Francis assured the envoy that he would use every effort, by letter to her Majesty and by verbal instructions to his son-in-law, Sir Philip Sidney, to further the success of the negotiation, and that he deeply regretted his enforced absence from the court on so important an occasion.

Matters were proceeding most favourably, and the all-important point of sending an auxiliary force of Englishmen to the relief of Antwerp—before it should be too late, and in advance of the final conclusion of the treaty between the countries—had been nearly conceded. Just at that moment, however, “as ill-luck would have it,” said Ortel, “came a letter from Gilpin. I don’t think he meant it in malice, but the effect was most pernicious.”¹ He sent the information that a new attack was to be made by the 10th May upon the Kowenstyn, that it was sure to be successful, and that the siege of Antwerp was as good as raised. So Lord Burghley informed me, in presence of Lord Leicester, that her Majesty was determined to await the issue of this enterprise. It was quite too late to get troops in readiness, to co-operate with the States’ army, so soon as the 10th May, and as Antwerp was so sure to be relieved, there was no pressing necessity for haste. I uttered most bitter complaints to these lords and to other counsellors of the Queen, that she should thus draw back, on account of a letter from a single individual, without paying sufficient heed to the despatches from the States-General, who certainly knew their own affairs and their own necessities better than any one else could do, but her Majesty sticks firm to her resolution.”²

Here were immense mistakes committed on all sides. The premature shooting up of those three rockets from the cathedral-tower, on the unlucky 10th May, had thus not only

¹ “Nu zynde in al desen geoccu-peert, voert het ongeluck zeker missaive van den Secretaris Gilpin, uyt Mid-delbourg, daertoe, hoewel ick nyet en

dencke tzelve uyt eenich malitie by hem geschiet te zyn,” &c. (Ibid.)

² Ibid.

ruined the first assault against the Kowenstyn, but also the second and the more promising adventure. Had the four thousand bold Englishmen there enlisted, and who could have reached the Provinces in time to cooperate in that great enterprise, have stood side by side with the Hollanders, the Zeelanders, and the Antwerpers, upon that fatal dyke, it is almost a certainty that Antwerp would have been relieved, and the whole of Flanders and Brabant permanently annexed to the independent commonwealth, which would have thus assumed at once most imposing proportions.

It was a great blunder of Sainte Aldegonde to station in the cathedral, on so important an occasion, watchmen in whose judgment he could not thoroughly rely. It was a blunder in Gilpin, intelligent as he generally showed himself, to write in such sanguine style before the event. But it was the greatest blunder of all for Queen Elizabeth to suspend her cooperation at the very instant when, as the result showed, it was likely to prove most successful. It was a chapter of blunders from first to last, but the most fatal of all the errors was the one thus prompted by the great Queen's most traitorous characteristic, her obstinate parsimony.

And now began a series of sharp chafferings on both sides, not very much to the credit of either party. The kingdom of England, and the rebellious Provinces of Spain, were drawn to each other by an irresistible law of political attraction. Their absorption into each other seemed natural and almost inevitable; and the weight of the strong Protestant organism, had it been thus completed, might have balanced the great Catholic League which was clustering about Spain. It was unfortunate that the two governments of England and the Netherlands should now assume the attitude of traders driving a hard bargain with each other, rather than that of two important commonwealths, upon whose action, at that momentous epoch, the weal and wo of Christendom was hanging. It is quite true that the danger to England was great, but that danger in any event was to be confronted.

Philip was to be defied, and, by assuming the cause of the Provinces to be her own, which it unquestionably was, Elizabeth was taking the diadem from her head—as the King of Sweden well observed—and adventuring it upon the doubtful chance of war.¹ Would it not have been better then—her mind being once made up—promptly to accept all the benefits, as well as all the hazards, of the bold game to which she was of necessity a party? But she could not yet believe in the incredible meanness of Henry III. “I asked her Majesty” (3rd May, 1585), said Ortel, “whether, in view of these vast preparations in France, it did not behove her to be most circumspect and upon her guard. For, in the opinion of many men, everything showed one great scheme already laid down—a general conspiracy throughout Christendom against the reformed religion. She answered me, that thus far she could not perceive this to be the case; nor could she believe,” she said, ‘that the King of France could be so faint-hearted as to submit to such injuries from the Guises.’”²

Time was very soon to show the nature of that unhappy monarch with regard to injuries, and to prove to Elizabeth the error she had committed in doubting his faint-heartedness. Meanwhile, time was passing, and the Netherlands were shivering in the storm. They needed the open sunshine which her caution kept too long behind the clouds. For it was now enjoined upon Walsingham to manifest a coldness upon the part of the English government towards the States. Davison was to be allowed to return; “but,” said Sir Francis, “her Majesty would not have you accompany the commissioners who are coming from the Low Countries, but to come over, either before them or after them, lest it be thought they come over by her Majesty’s procurement.”³

As if they were not coming over by her Majesty’s most especial procurement, and as if it would matter to Philip

¹ Camden, 321.

² MS. Letter of Ortel, 8 May, 1585, before cited.

³ Walsingham to Davison, 22 April, 1585, S. P. Office MS.

—the union once made between England and Holland—whether the invitation to that union came first from the one party or the other !

“ I am retired for my health from the court to mine own house,” said Walsingham, “ but I find those in whose judgment her Majesty reposeth greatest trust so coldly affected unto the cause, as I have no great hope of the matter ; and yet, for that the hearts of princes are in the hands of God, who both can will and dispose them at his pleasure, I would be loath to hinder the repair of the commissioners.”¹

Here certainly had the sun gone most suddenly into a cloud. Sir Francis would be loath to advise the commissioners to stay at home, but he obviously thought them coming on as bootless an errand as that which had taken their colleagues so recently into France.

The cause of the trouble was Flushing. Hence the tears, and the coldness, and the scoldings, on the part of the imperious and the economical Queen. Flushing was the patrimony—a large portion of that which was left to him—of Count Maurice. It was deeply mortgaged for the payment of the debts of William the Silent, but his son Maurice, so long as the elder brother Philip William remained a captive in Spain, wrote himself Marquis of Flushing and Kampveer, and derived both revenue and importance from his rights in that important town. The States of Zeeland, while desirous of a political fusion of the two countries, were averse from the prospect of converting, by exception, their commercial capital into an English city, the remainder of the Provinces remaining meanwhile upon their ancient footing. The negotiations on the subject caused a most ill-timed delay. The States finding the English government cooling, affected to grow tepid themselves. This was the true mercantile system, perhaps, for managing a transaction most thriftily, but frankness and promptness would have been more statesmanlike at such a juncture.

¹ Walsingham to Davison, MS. just cited.

"I am sorry to understand," wrote Walsingham, "that the States are not yet grown to a full resolution for the delivering of the town of Flushing into her Majesty's hands. The Queen finding the people of that island so wavering and inconstant, besides that they can hardly, after the so long enjoying a popular liberty, bear a regal authority, would be loath to embark herself into so dangerous a war without some sufficient caution received from them. It is also greatly to be doubted, that if, by practice and corruption, that town might be recovered by the Spaniards, it would put all the rest of the country in peril. I find her Majesty, in case that town may be gotten, fully resolved to receive them into her protection, so as it may also be made probable unto her that the promised three hundred thousand guilders the month will be duly paid."¹

A day or two after writing this letter, Walsingham sent one afternoon, in a great hurry, for Ortel, and informed him very secretly, that, according to information just received, the deputies from the States were coming without sufficient authority in regard to this very matter. Thus all the good intentions of the English government were likely to be frustrated, and the Provinces to be reduced to direful extremity.

"What can we possibly advise her Majesty to do?" asked Walsingham, "since you are not willing to put confidence in her intentions. You are trying to bring her into a public war, in which she is to risk her treasure and the blood of her subjects against the greatest potentates of the world, and you hesitate meantime at giving her such security as is required for the very defence of the Provinces themselves. The deputies are coming hither to offer the sovereignty to her Majesty, as was recently done in France, or, if that should not prove acceptable, they are to ask assistance in men and money upon a mere *taliter qualiter* guaranty. That's not the way. And there are plenty of ill-disposed persons here to take advantage of this position of affairs to ruin the interest

¹ Minute to Gilpin, $\frac{7}{12}$ May, 1585. S. P. Office MS.

of the Provinces now placed on so good a footing. Moreover, in this perpetual sending of despatches back and forth, much precious time is consumed ; and this is exactly what our enemies most desire."¹

In accordance with Walsingham's urgent suggestions, Ortel wrote at once to his constituents, imploring them to remedy this matter. "Do not allow," he said, "any more time to be wasted. Let us not painfully build a wall only to knock our own heads against it, to the dismay of our friends and the gratification of our enemies."²

It was at last arranged that an important blank should be left in the articles to be brought by the deputies, upon which vacant place the names of certain cautionary towns, afterwards to be agreed upon, were to be inscribed by common consent. Meantime the English ministers were busy in preparing to receive the commissioners, and to bring the Netherland matter handsomely before the legislature.

The integrity, the caution, the thrift, the hesitation, which characterized Elizabeth's government, were well portrayed in the habitual language of the Lord Treasurer, chief minister of a third-rate kingdom now called on to play a first-rate part, thoroughly acquainted with the moral and intellectual power of the nation whose policy he directed, and prophetically conscious of the great destinies which were opening upon her horizon. Lord Burghley could hardly be censured—least of all ridiculed—for the patient and somewhat timid attributes of his nature. The ineffable ponderings, which might now be ludicrous, on the part of a minister of the British Empire, with two hundred millions of subjects and near a hundred millions of revenue, were almost inevitable in a man guiding a realm of four millions of people with half a million of income.

It was, on the whole, a strange negotiation, this between England and Holland. A commonwealth had arisen, but was unconscious of the strength which it was to find in the

¹ Brief van Ortel aan de Staaten Generaal, 13 Mei, 1585. Hague Archives MS.

² Ibid.

principle of states' union, and of religious equality. It sought, on the contrary, to exchange its federal sovereignty for provincial dependence, and to imitate, to a certain extent, the very intolerance by which it had been driven into revolt. It was not unnatural that the Netherlands should hate the Roman Catholic religion, in the name of which they had endured such infinite tortures, but it is, nevertheless, painful to observe that they requested Queen Elizabeth, whom they styled defender, not of "the faith" but of the "reformed religion," to exclude from the Provinces, in case she accepted the sovereignty, the exercise of all religious rites except those belonging to the reformed church. They, however, expressly provided against inquisition into conscience.¹ Private houses were to be sacred, the papists free within their own walls, but the churches were to be closed to those of the ancient faith. This was not so bad as to hang, burn, drown, and bury alive nonconformists, as had been done by Philip and the holy inquisition in the name of the church of Rome; nor is it very surprising that the horrible past should have caused that church to be regarded with sentiments of such deep-rooted hostility as to make the Hollanders shudder at the idea of its re-establishment. Yet, no doubt, it was idle for either Holland or England, at that day, to talk of a reconciliation with Rome. A step had separated them, but it was a step from a precipice. No human power could bridge the chasm. The steep contrast between the league and the counter-league, between the systems of Philip and Mucio, and that of Elizabeth and Olden-Barneveld, ran through the whole world of thought, action, and life.

But still the negociation between Holland and England was a strange one. Holland wished to give herself entirely, and England feared to accept. Elizabeth, in place of sovereignty, wanted mortgages; while Holland was afraid

¹ Points et Articles concus et arrestes par les etats generaux de Pay Bas pour traicter avec la Serenissime Reyne d'Angleterre sur la souveraineté. Hague Archives, MS.

Art. II. "Sans qu'icelle pourra estre changé ou autre Religion es dictz pays exercée. Pourveu toutefois que personne ne sera recherché en sa conscience."

to give a part, although offering the whole. There was no great inequality between the two countries. Both were instinctively conscious, perhaps, of standing on the edge of a vast expansion. Both felt that they were about to stretch their wings suddenly for a flight over the whole earth. Yet each was a very inferior power, in comparison with the great empires of the past or those which then existed.

It is difficult, without a strong effort of the imagination, to reduce the English empire to the slender proportions which belonged to her in the days of Elizabeth. That epoch was full of light and life. The constellations which have for centuries been shining in the English firmament were then human creatures walking English earth. The captains, statesmen, corsairs, merchant-adventurers, poets, dramatists, the great Queen herself, the Cecils, Raleigh, Walsingham, Drake, Hawkins, Gilbert, Howard, Willoughby, the Norrises, Essex, Leicester, Sidney, Spenser, Shakspeare and the lesser but brilliant lights which surrounded him ; such were the men who lifted England upon an elevation to which she was not yet entitled by her material grandeur. At last she had done with Rome, and her expansion dated from that moment. Holland and England, by the very condition of their existence, were sworn foes to Philip. Elizabeth stood excommunicated of the Pope. There was hardly a month in which intelligence was not sent by English agents out of the Netherlands and France, that assassins, hired by Philip, were making their way to England to attempt the life of the Queen. The Netherlanders were rebels to the Spanish monarch, and they stood, one and all, under death-sentence by Rome. The alliance was inevitable and wholesome. Elizabeth was, however, consistently opposed to the acceptance of a new sovereignty. England was a weak power. Ireland was at her side in a state of chronic rebellion—a stepping-stone for Spain in its already foreshadowed invasion. Scotland was at her back with a strong party of Catholics, stipendiaries of Philip, encouraged by the Guises and periodically inflamed to enthusiasm by the hope of rescuing Mary Stuart from her

imprisonment, bringing her rival's head to the block, and elevating the long-suffering martyr upon the throne of all the British Islands. And in the midst of England itself, conspiracies were weaving every day. The mortal duel between the two queens was slowly approaching its termination. In the fatal form of Mary was embodied everything most perilous to England's glory and to England's Queen. Mary Stuart meant absolutism at home, subjection to Rome and Spain abroad. The uncle Guises were stipendiaries of Philip, Philip was the slave of the Pope. Mucio had frightened the unlucky Henry III. into submission, and there was no health nor hope in France. For England, Mary Stuart embodied the possible relapse into sloth, dependence, barbarism. For Elizabeth, Mary Stuart embodied sedition, conspiracy, rebellion, battle, murder, and sudden death.

It was not to be wondered at that the Queen thus situated should be cautious, when about throwing down the gauntlet to the greatest powers of the earth. Yet the commissioners from the United States were now on their way to England to propose the throwing of that gauntlet. What now was that England?

Its population was, perhaps, not greater than the numbers which dwell to-day within its capital and immediate suburbs. Its revenue was perhaps equal to the sixtieth part of the annual interest on the present national debt. Single, highly-favoured individuals, not only in England but in other countries cis- and trans-Atlantic, enjoy incomes equal to more than half the amount of Elizabeth's annual budget. London, then containing perhaps one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, was hardly so imposing a town as Antwerp, and was inferior in most material respects to Paris and Lisbon. Forty-two hundred children were born every year within its precincts, and the deaths were nearly as many.¹ In plague years, which were only too frequent, as many as twenty and even thirty thousand people had been annually swept away.²

¹ Meteren, xiii. 243. The historian was, for a long period, resident in London at this epoch.

² Ibid.

At the present epoch there are seventeen hundred births every week, and about one thousand deaths.

It is instructive to throw a glance at the character of the English people as it appeared to intelligent foreigners at that day ; for the various parts of the world were not then so closely blended, nor did national colours and characteristics flow so liquidly into each other, as is the case in these days of intimate juxta-position.

“The English are a very clever, handsome, and well-made people,” says a learned Antwerp historian and merchant, who had resided a long time in London, “but, like all islanders, by nature weak and tender. They are generally fair, particularly the women, who all—even to the peasant women—protect their complexions from the sun with fans and veils, as only the stately gentlewomen do in Germany and the Netherlands. As a people they are stout-hearted, vehement, eager, cruel in war, zealous in attack, little fearing death ; not revengeful, but fickle, presumptuous, rash, boastful, deceitful, very suspicious, especially of strangers, whom they despise. They are full of courteous and hypocritical gestures and words, which they consider to imply good manners, civility, and wisdom. They are well spoken, and very hospitable. They feed well, eating much meat, which—owing to the rainy climate and the ranker character of the grass—is not so firm and succulent as the meat of France and the Netherlands. The people are not so laborious as the French and Hollanders, preferring to lead an indolent life, like the Spaniards. The most difficult and ingenious of the handicrafts are in the hands of foreigners, as is the case with the lazy inhabitants of Spain. They feed many sheep, with fine wool, from which, two hundred years ago, they learned to make cloth. They keep many idle servants, and many wild animals for their pleasure, instead of cultivating the soil. They have many ships, but they do not even catch fish enough for their own consumption, but purchase of their neighbours. They dress very elegantly. Their costume is light and costly, but they are very changeable and capricious, altering their fashions

every year, both the men and the women. When they go away from home, riding or travelling, they always wear their best clothes, contrary to the habit of other nations. The English language is broken Dutch, mixed with French and British terms and words, but with a lighter pronunciation. They do not speak from the chest, like the Germans, but prattle only with the tongue.”¹

Here are few statistical facts, but certainly it is curious to see how many national traits thus photographed by a contemporary, have quite vanished, and have been exchanged for their very opposites. Certainly the last physiological criticism of all would indicate as great a national metamorphosis, during the last three centuries, as is offered by many other of the writer's observations.

“With regard to the women,” continues the same authority, “they are entirely in the power of the men, except in matters of life and death, yet they are not kept so closely and strictly as in Spain and elsewhere. They are not locked up, but have free management of their household, like the Netherlands and their other neighbours. They are gay in their clothing, taking well their ease, leaving house-work to the servant-maids, and are fond of sitting, finely-dressed, before their doors to see the passers-by and to be seen of them. In all banquets and dinner-parties they have the most honour, sitting at the upper end of the board, and being served first. Their time is spent in riding, lounging, card-playing, and making merry with their gossips at child-bearings, christenings, churchings, and burials; and all this conduct the men wink at, because such are the customs of the land. They much commend however the industry and careful habits of the German and Netherlands women, who do the work which in England devolves upon the men. Hence, England is called the paradise of married women, for the unmarried girls are kept much more strictly than upon the continent. The women are handsome, white, dressy, modest; although they go freely about the streets without bonnet, hood, or veil; but

¹ Emanuel van Meteren, ‘Nederlandsche Historien,’ xiii. 243.

the noble dames have lately learned to cover their faces with a silken mask or vizard with a plumage of feathers, for they change their fashions every year, to the astonishment of many."¹

Paul Hentzner, a tourist from Germany at precisely the same epoch, touches with equal minuteness on English characteristics. It may be observed, that, with some discrepancies, there is also much similarity in the views of the two critics.

"The English," says the whimsical Paul, "are serious, like the Germans, lovers of show, liking to be followed, wherever they go, by troops of servants, who wear their master's arms, in silver, fastened to their left sleeves, and are justly ridiculed for wearing tails hanging down their backs. They excel in dancing and music, for they are active and lively, although they are of thicker build than the Germans. They cut their hair close on the forehead, letting it hang down on either side. They are good sailors, and better pirates, cunning, treacherous, thievish. Three hundred and upwards are hanged annually in London. Hawking is the favourite sport of the nobility. The English are more polite in eating than the French, devouring less bread, but more meat, which they roast in perfection. They put a great deal of sugar in their drink. Their beds are covered with tapestry, even those of farmers. They are powerful in the field, successful against their enemies, impatient of anything like slavery, vastly fond of great ear-filling noises, such as cannon-firing, drum-beating, and bell-ringing; so that it is very common for a number of them, when they have got a cup too much in their heads, to go up to some belfry, and ring the bells for an hour together, for the sake of the amusement. If they see a foreigner very well made or particularly handsome, they will say "'tis pity he is not an Englishman."

It is also somewhat amusing, at the present day, to find a German elaborately explaining to his countrymen the mysteries of tobacco-smoking, as they appeared to his un-

¹ Emanuel van Meteren, just cited.

² Paulus Hentznerus, 'Itinerarium | Germaniae, Galliae, Angliae, Italiae,' Breslae, 1617.

sophisticated eyes in England. "At the theatres and everywhere else," says the traveller, "the English are constantly smoking tobacco in the following manner. They have pipes, made on purpose, of clay. At the further end of these is a bowl. Into the bowl they put the herb, and then setting fire to it, they draw the smoke into their mouths, which they puff out again through their nostrils, like funnels,"¹ and so on; conscientious explanations which a German tourist of our own times might think it superfluous to offer to his compatriots.

It is also instructive to read that the light-fingered gentry of the metropolis were nearly as adroit in their calling as they are at present, after three additional centuries of development for their delicate craft; for the learned Tobias Salander, the travelling companion of Paul Hentzner, finding himself at a Lord Mayor's Show, was eased of his purse, containing nine crowns, as skilfully as the feat could have been done by the best pickpocket of the nineteenth century, much to that learned person's discomfiture.²

Into such an England and among such English the Netherland envoys had now been despatched on their most important errand.

After twice putting back, through stress of weather, the commissioners, early in July, arrived at London, and were "lodged and very worshipfully appointed at charges of her Majesty in the Clothworkers' Hall in Pyncheon-lane, near Tower-street."³ About the Tower and its faubourgs the buildings were stated to be as elegant as they were in the city itself, although this was hardly very extravagant commendation. From this district a single street led along the river's strand to Westminster, where were the old and new palaces, the famous hall and abbey, the Parliament chambers, and the bridge to Southwark, built of stone, with twenty arches, sixty feet high, and with rows of shops and dwelling-houses on both its sides. Thence, along the broad and beautiful river, were dotted

¹ Paulus Hentznerus, just cited.

² Ibid.

³ Stowe's 'Chronicle,' p. 708.

here and there many stately mansions and villas, residences of bishops and nobles, extending farther and farther west as the city melted rapidly into the country. London itself was a town lying high upon a hill—the hill of Lud—and consisted of a coil of narrow, tortuous, unseemly streets, each with a black, noisome rivulet running through its centre, and with rows of three-storied, leaden-roofed houses, built of timber-work filled in with lime, with many gables, and with the upper stories overhanging and darkening the basements. There were one hundred and twenty-one churches, small and large, the most conspicuous of which was the Cathedral. Old Saint Paul's was not a very magnificent edifice—but it was an extremely large one, for it was seven hundred and twenty feet long, one hundred and thirty broad, and had a massive quadrangular tower, two hundred and sixty feet high. Upon this tower had stood a timber-steeple, rising to a height of five hundred and thirty-four feet from the ground, but it had been struck by lightning in the year 1561, and consumed to the stone-work.¹

The Queen's favourite residence was Greenwich Palace, the place of her birth, and to this mansion, on the 9th of July, the Netherland envoys were conveyed, in royal barges, from the neighbourhood of Pyncheon-lane, for their first audience.

The deputation was a strong one. There was Falck of Zeeland, a man of consummate adroitness, perhaps not of as satisfactory integrity; "a shrewd fellow and a fine," as Lord Leicester soon afterwards characterised him. There was Menin, pensionary of Dort, an eloquent and accomplished orator, and employed on this occasion as chief spokesman of the legation—"a deeper man, and, I think, an honestier," said the same personage, adding, with an eye to business, "and he is but poor, which you must consider, but with great secrecy."² There was Paul Buys, whom we have met with before; keen, subtle, somewhat loose of life, very passionate, a most energetic and valuable friend to England, a deter-

¹ Meteren, xiii. 243. Camden, 57.

² Bruce's 'Leycest. Corresp.' 409, ⁴/₁₄ Sept. 1586.

mined foe to France, who had resigned the important post of Holland's Advocate, when the mission offering sovereignty to Henry III. had been resolved upon, and who had since that period been most influential in procuring the present triumph of the English policy. Through his exertions the Province of Holland had been induced at an early moment to furnish the most ample instructions to the commissioners for the satisfaction of Queen Elizabeth in the great matter of the mortgages. "Judge if this Paul Buys has done his work well," said a French agent in the Netherlands, who, despite the infamous conduct of his government towards the Provinces, was doing his best to frustrate the subsequent negotiation with England, "and whether or no he has Holland under his thumb."¹ The same individual had conceived hopes from Falck of Zeeland. That Province, in which lay the great bone of contention between the Queen and the States—the important town of Flushing—was much slower than Holland to agree to the English policy. It is to be feared that Falck was not the most ingenuous and disinterested politician that could be found even in an age not distinguished for frankness or purity; for even while setting forth upon the mission to Elizabeth, he was still clinging, or affecting to cling, to the wretched delusion of French assistance. "I regret infinitely," said Falck to the French agent just mentioned, "that I am employed in this affair, and that it is necessary in our present straits to have recourse to England. There is—so to speak—not a person in our Province that is inclined that way, all recognizing very well that France is much more salutary for us, besides that we all bear her a certain affection. Indeed, if I were assured that the King still felt any goodwill towards us, I would so manage matters that neither the Queen of England, nor any other prince whatever except his most Christian Majesty should take a bite at this country, at least at this Province, and with that view, while waiting for news from France, I will keep things in suspense, and spin them out as long as it is possible to do."²

¹ Groen v. Prinsterer, 'Archives,' &c. i. 14.

² *Ibid.*

The news from France happened soon to be very conclusive, and it then became difficult even for Falck to believe—after intelligence received of the accord between Henry III. and the Guises—that his Christian Majesty would be inclined for a bite at the Netherlands. This duplicity on the part of so leading a personage furnishes a key to much of the apparent dilatoriness on the part of the English government. It has been seen that Elizabeth, up to the last moment, could not fairly comprehend the ineffable meanness of the French monarch. She told Ortel that she saw no reason to believe in that great Catholic conspiracy against herself and against all Protestantism which was so soon to be made public by the King's edict of July, promulgated at the very instant of the arrival in England of the Netherland envoys. When that dread fiat had gone forth, the most determined favourer of the French alliance could no longer admit its possibility, and Falck became the more open to that peculiar line of argument which Leicester had suggested with regard to one of the other deputies. "I will do my best," wrote Walsingham, "to procure that Paul Buys and Falck shall receive underhand some reward."¹

Besides Menin, Falck, and Buys, were Noel de Caron, an experienced diplomatist; the poet-soldier, Van der Does, heroic defender of Leyden; De Gryze, Hersolte, Francis Maalzoen, and three legal Frisians of pith and substance, Feitsma, Aisma, and Jongema;² a dozen Dutchmen together—as muscular champions as ever little republic sent forth to wrestle with all comers in the slippery ring of diplomacy. For it was instinctively felt that here were conclusions to be tried with a nation of deep, solid thinkers, who were aware that a great crisis in the world's history had occurred, and would put forth their most substantial men to deal with it. Burghley and Walsingham, the great Queen herself, were no feather-weights like the frivolous Henry III. and his

¹ Walsingham to Davison, ^{23 Oct.} _{3 Nov.} 1585. S. P. Office MS.

² Wagenaar, viii. 90.

minions. It was pity, however, that the discussions about to ensue presented from the outset rather the aspect of a hard-hitting encounter of antagonists than that of a frank and friendly congress between two great parties whose interests were identical.

Since the death of William the Silent, there was no one individual in the Netherlands to impersonate the great struggle of the Provinces with Spain and Rome, and to concentrate upon his own head a poetical, dramatic, and yet most legitimate interest. The great purpose of the present history must be found in its illustration of the creative power of civil and religious freedom. Here was a little republic, just born into the world, suddenly bereft of its tutelary saint, left to its own resources, yet already instinct with healthy vigorous life, and playing its difficult part among friends and enemies with audacity, self-reliance, and success. To a certain extent its achievements were anonymous, but a great principle manifested itself through a series of noble deeds. Statesmen, soldiers, patriots, came forward on all sides to do the work which was to be done, and those who were brought into closest contact with the commonwealth acknowledged in strongest language the signal ability with which, self-guided, she steered her course. Nevertheless, there was at this moment one Netherlander, the chief of the present mission to England, already the foremost statesman of his country, whose name will not soon be effaced from the record of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. That man was John of Olden-Barneveld.

He was now in his thirty-eighth year, having been born at Amersfoot on the 14th of September, 1547.¹ He bore an imposing name, for the Olden-Barnevelds of Gelderland were a race of unquestionable and antique nobility. His enemies, however, questioned his right to the descent which he claimed. They did not dispute that the great grandfather,

¹ Naeranus, 'Historie van het Leven en Sterven van Johans van Olden-Barneveldt, 1648, p. 3. 'Levensbeschrij-

ving Nederalandscher Mannen en Vrouwen,' II. 247.

Claas van Olden-Barneveld, was of distinguished lineage and allied to many illustrious houses, but they denied that Claas was really the great grandfather of John. John's father, Gerritt, they said, was a nameless outcast, a felon, a murderer, who had escaped the punishment due to his crimes, but had dragged out a miserable existence in the downs, burrowing like a rabbit in the sand. They had also much to say in disparagement of all John's connections. Not only was his father a murderer, but his wife, whom he had married for money, was the child of a most horrible incest, his sisters were prostitutes, his sons and brothers were debauchees and drunkards, and, in short, never had a distinguished man a more uncomfortable and discreditable family-circle than that which surrounded Barneveld, if the report of his enemies was to be believed.¹ Yet it is agreeable to reflect that, with all the venom which they had such power of secreting, these malignant tongues had been unable to destroy the reputation of the man himself. John's character was honourable and upright, his intellectual power not disputed even by those who at a later period hated him the most bitterly. He had been a profound and indefatigable student from his earliest youth. He had read law at Leyden, in France, at Heidelberg. Here, in the head-quarters of German Calvinism, his youthful mind had long pondered the dread themes of foreknowledge, judgment absolute, free will, and predestination. To believe it worth the while of a rational and intelligent Deity to create annually several millions of thinking beings, who were to struggle for a brief period on earth, and to consume in perpetual brimstone afterwards, while others were predestined to endless enjoyment, seemed to him an indifferent exchange for a faith in the purgatory and paradise of Rome. Perplexed in the extreme, the youthful John bethought himself of an inscription over the gateway of his famous but questionable great grandfather's house at Amersfort—*nīl scire tutissima fides.*² He resolved thenceforth to adopt a system of igno-

¹ 'Gulden Legende van den Nieuwen St. Jan,' 1618.

² Naeranus, p. 5.

rance upon matters beyond the flaming walls of the world ; to do the work before him manfully and faithfully while he walked the earth, and to trust that a benevolent Creator would devote neither him nor any other man to eternal hell-fire. For this most offensive doctrine he was howled at by the strictly pious, while he earned still deeper opprobrium by daring to advocate religious toleration. In face of the endless horrors inflicted by the Spanish Inquisition upon his native land, he had the hardihood—although a determined Protestant himself—to claim for Roman Catholics the right to exercise their religion in the free States on equal terms with those of the reformed faith. “Any one,” said his enemies, “could smell what that meant who had not a wooden nose.”¹ In brief, he was a liberal Christian, both in theory and practice, and he nobly confronted in consequence the wrath of bigots on both sides. At a later period the most zealous Calvinists called him Pope John, and the opinions to which he was to owe such appellations had already been formed in his mind.

After completing his very thorough legal studies, he had practised as an advocate in Holland and Zeeland. An early defender of civil and religious freedom, he had been brought at an early day into contact with William the Silent, who recognized his ability. He had borne a snap-hance on his shoulder as a volunteer in the memorable attempt to relieve Haarlem, and was one of the few survivors of that bloody night. He had stood outside the walls of Leyden in company of the Prince of Orange when that magnificent destruction of the dykes had taken place by which the city had been saved from the fate impending over it. At a still more recent period we have seen him landing from the gun-boats upon the Kowenstyn, on the fatal 26th May. These military adventures were, however, but brief and accidental episodes in his career, which was that of a statesman and diplomatist. As pensionary of Rotterdam, he was constantly a member of the General

¹ “Waertoe dit alles soude strecken, | neusen hebben.” ‘Gulden Legende,’
konnen sy wel ruycken die geen houte | p. 33.

Assembly, and had already begun to guide the policy of the new commonwealth. His experience was considerable, and he was now in the high noon of his vigour and his usefulness.¹

He was a man of noble and imposing presence, with thick hair pushed from a broad forehead rising dome-like above a square and massive face; a strong deeply-coloured physiognomy, with shaggy brow, a chill blue eye, not winning but commanding, high cheek bones, a solid, somewhat scornful nose, a firm mouth and chin, enveloped in a copious brown beard; the whole head not unfitly framed in the stiff formal ruff of the period; and the tall stately figure well draped in magisterial robes of velvet and sable—such was John of Olden-Barneveld.

The Commissioners thus described arrived at Greenwich Stairs, and were at once ushered into the palace, a residence which had been much enlarged and decorated by Henry VIII. They were received with stately ceremony. The presence-chamber was hung with Gobelin tapestry, its floor strewn with rushes. Fifty gentlemen pensioners, with gilt battle-axes, and a throng of buffetiers, or beef-eaters, in that quaint old-world garb which has survived so many centuries, were in attendance, while the counsellors of the Queen, in their robes of state, waited around the throne.

There, in close skull-cap and dark flowing gown, was the subtle, monastic-looking Walsingham, with long, grave, melancholy face and Spanish eyes. There too, white staff in hand, was Lord High Treasurer Burghley, then sixty-five years of age, with serene blue eye, large, smooth, pale, scarce-wrinkled face and forehead; seeming, with his placid, symmetrical features, and great velvet bonnet, under which such silver hairs as remained were soberly tucked away, and with his long dark robes which swept the ground, more like a dignified gentlewoman than a statesman, but for the wintry beard which lay like a snow-drift on his ancient breast.

The Queen was then in the fifty-third year of her age, and

¹ Naeranus, 1-14. 'Levensbeschrijving,' &c. II. 246-241.

considered herself in the full bloom of her beauty. Her garments were of satin and velvet, with fringes of pearl as big as beans. A small gold crown was upon her head, and her red hair, throughout its multiplicity of curls, blazed with diamonds and emeralds. Her forehead was tall, her face long, her complexion fair, her eyes small, dark, and glittering, her nose high and hooked, her lips thin, her teeth black, her bosom white and liberally exposed. As she passed through the ante-chamber to the presence-hall, supplicants presented petitions upon their knees. Wherever she glanced, all prostrated themselves on the ground. The cry of "Long live Queen Elizabeth" was spontaneous and perpetual; the reply, "I thank you, my good people," was constant and cordial. She spoke to various foreigners in their respective languages, being mistress, besides the Latin and Greek, of French, Spanish, Italian, and German. As the Commissioners were presented to her by Lord Buckhurst it was observed that she was perpetually gloving and ungloving, as if to attract attention to her hand, which was esteemed a wonder of beauty. She spoke French with purity and elegance, but with a drawling, somewhat affected accent, saying "*Paar maa foi ; paar le Dieu vivaant*," and so forth, in a style which was ridiculed by Parisians, as she sometimes, to her extreme annoyance, discovered.¹

Joos de Menin, pensionary of Dort, in the name of all the envoys, made an elaborate address. He expressed the gratitude which the States entertained for her past kindness, and particularly for the good offices rendered by Ambassador Davison after the death of the Prince of Orange, and for the deep regret expressed by her Majesty for their disappointment in the hopes they had founded upon France.

"Since the death of the Prince of Orange," he said, "the States have lost many important cities, and now, for the preservation of their existence, they have need of a prince and sovereign lord to defend them against the tyranny and iniqui-

¹ Du Maurier, 'Mémoires,' 257.

tous oppression of the Spaniards and their adherents, who are more and more determined utterly to destroy their country, and reduce the poor people to a perpetual slavery worse than that of Indians, under the insupportable and detestable yoke of the Spanish Inquisition. We have felt a confidence that your Majesty will not choose to see us perish at the hands of the enemy against whom we have been obliged to sustain this long and cruel war. That war we have undertaken in order to preserve for the poor people their liberty, laws, and franchises, together with the exercise of the true Christian religion, of which your Majesty bears rightfully the title of defender, and against which the enemy and his allies have made so many leagues and devised so many ambushes and stratagems, besides organizing every day so many plots against the life of your Majesty and the safety of your realms—schemes which thus far the good God has averted for the good of Christianity and the maintenance of His churches. For these reasons, Madam, the States have taken a firm resolution to have recourse to your Majesty, seeing that it is an ordinary thing for all oppressed nations to apply in their calamity to neighbouring princes, and especially to such as are endowed with piety, justice, magnanimity, and other kingly virtues. For this reason we have been deputed to offer to your Majesty the sovereignty over these Provinces, under certain good and equitable conditions, having reference chiefly to the maintenance of the reformed religion and of our ancient liberties and customs. And although, in the course of these long and continued wars, the enemy has obtained possession of many cities and strong places within our country, nevertheless the Provinces of Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, and Friesland, are, thank God, still entire. And in those lands are many large and stately cities, beautiful and deep rivers, admirable sea-ports, from which your Majesty and your successors can derive much good fruit and commodity, of which it is scarcely necessary to make a long recital. This point, however, beyond the rest, merits a special consideration, namely, that the conjunction of those Provinces of Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, and

Friesland, together with the cities of Sluys and Ostend, with the kingdoms of your Majesty, carries with it the absolute empire of the great ocean, and consequently an assurance of perpetual felicity for your subjects. We therefore humbly entreat you to agree to our conditions, to accept the sovereign seignory of these Provinces, and consequently to receive the people of the same as your very humble and obedient subjects, under the perpetual safeguard of your crown—a people certainly as faithful and loving towards their princes and sovereign lords, to speak without boasting, as any in all Christendom.

“So doing, Madam, you will preserve many beautiful churches which it has pleased God to raise up in these lands, now much afflicted and shaken, and you will deliver this country and people—before the iniquitous invasion of the Spaniards, so rich and flourishing by the great commodity of the sea, their ports and rivers, their commerce and manufactures, for all which they have such natural advantages—from ruin and perpetual slavery of body and soul. This will be a truly excellent work, agreeable to God, profitable to Christianity, worthy of immortal praise, and comporting with the heroic virtues of your Majesty, and ensuring the prosperity of your country and people. With this we present to your Majesty our articles and conditions, and pray that the King of Kings may preserve you from all your enemies and ever have you in His holy keeping.”¹

The Queen listened intently and very courteously to the delivery of this address, and then made answer in French to this effect:—“Gentlemen,—Had I a thousand tongues I should not be able to express my obligation to you for the great and handsome offers which you have just made. I firmly believe that this proceeds from the true zeal, devotion, and affection, which you have always borne me, and I am certain that you have ever preferred me to all the princes and potentates in the world. Even when you selected the late Duke of Anjou,

¹ ‘Vertoog door de Gedeputeerden | ix^{den} July, 1585, voor de Koningin
by monde van der Heere Menin den | gedaan.’ Hague Archives, MS.

who was so dear to me, and to whose soul I hope that God has been merciful, I know that you would sooner have offered your country to me if I had desired that you should do so. Certainly I esteem it a great thing that you wish to be governed by me, and I feel so much obliged to you in consequence that I will never abandon you, but, on the contrary, assist you till the last sigh of my life. I know very well that your princes have treated you ill, and that the Spaniards are endeavouring to ruin you entirely; but I will come to your aid, and I will consider what I can do, consistently with my honour, in regard to the articles which you have brought me. They shall be examined by the members of my council, and I promise that I will not keep you three or four months, for I know very well that your affairs require haste, and that they will become ruinous if you are not assisted. It is not my custom to procrastinate, and upon this occasion I shall not dally, as others have done, but let you have my answer very soon.”¹

Certainly, if the Provinces needed a king, which they had most unequivocally declared to be the case, they might have wandered the whole earth over, and, had it been possible, searched through the whole range of history, before finding a monarch with a more kingly spirit than the great Queen to whom they had at last had recourse.

Unfortunately, she was resolute in her refusal to accept the offered sovereignty. The first interview terminated with this exchange of addresses, and the deputies departed in their barges for their lodgings in Pynchon-lane.

The next two days were past in perpetual conferences, generally at Lord Burghley's house, between the envoys and the lords of the council, in which the acceptance of the sovereignty was vehemently urged on the part of the Netherlanders, and steadily declined in the name of her Majesty.

“Her Highness,” said Burghley, “cannot be induced, by any writing or harangue that you can make, to accept the

¹ *Vertoog*, &c. MS. before cited. Compare *Bor*, II. 635, *seq.* Hoofd, *Vervoght*, 118.

principality or proprietorship as sovereign, and it will therefore be labour lost for you to exhibit any writing for the purpose of changing her intention. It will be better to content yourselves with her Majesty's consent to assist you, and to take you under her protection."¹

Nevertheless, two days afterwards, a writing was exhibited, drawn up by Menin, in which another elaborate effort was made to alter the Queen's determination. This anxiety, on the part of men already the principal personages in a republic, to merge the independent existence of their commonwealth in another and a foreign political organism, proved, at any rate, that they were influenced by patriotic motives alone. It is also instructive to observe the intense language with which the necessity of a central paramount sovereignty for all the Provinces, and the inconveniences of the separate States' right principle were urged by a deputation, *at the head of which stood Olden-Barneveld*. "Although it is not becoming in us," said they, "to enquire into your Majesty's motives for refusing the sovereignty of our country, nevertheless, we cannot help observing that your consent would be most profitable, as well to your Majesty and your successors, as to the Provinces themselves. By your acceptance of the sovereignty the two peoples would be, as it were, united in one body. This would cause a fraternal benevolence between them, and a single reverence, love, and obedience to your Majesty. The two peoples being thus under the government of the same sovereign prince, the intrigues and practices which the enemy could attempt with persons under a separate subjection, would of necessity surcease. Moreover, those Provinces are all distinct duchies, counties, seignories, governed by their own magistrates, laws, and ordinances; each by itself, without any authority or command to be exercised by one Province over another. To this end they have need of a supreme power and of one sovereign prince or seignor, who may command all equally, having a constant regard to the public weal—considered as a generality, and not with regard to the profit of

¹ MS. Report of the Envoys. Comp. Bor, Hoofl, *ubi sup*.

the one or the other individual Province—and causing promptly and universally to be executed such ordinances as may be made in the matter of war or police, according to various emergencies. Each Province, on the contrary, retaining its sovereignty over its own inhabitants, obedience will not be so promptly and completely rendered to the commands of the lieutenant-general of your Majesty, and many a good enterprise and opportunity will be lost. Where there is not a single authority it is always found that one party endeavours to usurp power over another, or to escape doing his duty so thoroughly as the others. And this has notoriously been the case in the matter of contributions, imposts, and similar matters.”¹

Thus much, and more of similar argument, logically urged, made it sufficiently evident that twenty years of revolt and of hard fighting against one king, had not destroyed in the minds of the leading Netherlanders their conviction of the necessity of kingship. If the new commonwealth was likely to remain a republic, it was, at that moment at any rate, because they could not find a king. Certainly they did their best to annex themselves to England, and to become loyal subjects of England's Elizabeth. But the Queen, besides other objections to the course proposed by the Provinces, thought that she could do a better thing in the way of mortgages. In this, perhaps, there was something of the penny-wise policy, which sprang from one great defect in her character. At any rate much mischief was done by the mercantile spirit which dictated the hard chaffering on both sides the Channel at this important juncture ; for during this tedious flint-paring, Antwerp, which might have been saved, was falling into the hands of Philip. It should never be forgotten, however, that the Queen had no standing army, and but a small revenue.

¹ Remonstrantie der Gedeputeerden aan H. M. In the MS. Report before cited. Compare Bor, *ubi sup.*, who, as an historian of the States' right and republican party, seems to have been unwilling to give currency to the

strong monarchical and centripetal tendencies, thus expressed by men subsequently the representatives of very different doctrines; and so omits these passages altogether from his abstract of the report.

The men to be sent from England to the Netherland wars were first to be levied wherever it was possible to find them. In truth, many were pressed in the various wards of London, furnished with red coats and matchlocks at the expense of the citizens, and so despatched, helter-skelter, in small squads as opportunity offered.¹ General Sir John Norris was already superintending these operations, by command of the Queen, before the present formal negotiation with the States had begun.

Subsequently to the 11th July, on which day the second address had been made to Elizabeth, the envoys had many conferences with Leicester, Burghley, Walsingham, and other councillors, without making much progress. There was perpetual wrangling about figures and securities.

"What terms will you pledge for the repayment of the monies to be advanced?" asked Burghley and Walsingham.

"But if her Majesty takes the sovereignty," answered the deputies, "there will be no question of guarantees. The Queen will possess our whole land, and there will be no need of any repayment."

"And we have told you over and over again," said the Lord Treasurer, "that her Majesty will never think of accepting the sovereignty. She will assist you in money and men, and must be repaid to the last farthing when the war is over; and, until that period, must have solid pledges in the shape of a town in each Province."

Then came interrogatories as to the amount of troops and funds to be raised respectively by the Queen and the States for the common cause. The Provinces wished her Majesty to pay one-third of the whole expense, while her Majesty was reluctant to pay one-quarter. The States wished a permanent force to be kept on foot in the Netherlands of thirteen thousand infantry and two thousand cavalry for the field, and twenty-three thousand for garrisons. The councillors thought the last item too much. Then there were queries as to the expense of maintaining a force in the Provinces. The envoys

¹ Stowe, 'Chronicle,' 708-709.

² MS. Report.

reckoned one pound sterling, or ten florins, a month for the pay of each foot soldier, including officers ; and for the cavalry, three times as much. This seemed reasonable, and the answers to the inquiries touching the expense of the war-vessels and sailors were equally satisfactory. Nevertheless it was difficult to bring the Queen up to the line to which the envoys had been limited by their instructions: Five thousand foot and one thousand horse serving at the Queen's expense till the war should be concluded, over and above the garrisons for such cautionary towns as should be agreed upon ; this was considered, by the States, the minimum. The Queen held out for giving only four thousand foot and four hundred horse, and for deducting the garrisons even from this slender force. As guarantee for the expense thus to be incurred, she required that Flushing and Brill should be placed in her hands. Moreover the position of Antwerp complicated the negotiation. Elizabeth, fully sensible of the importance of preserving that great capital, offered four thousand soldiers to serve until that city should be relieved, requiring repayment within three months after the object should have been accomplished. As special guarantee for such repayment she required Sluys and Ostend.¹ This was sharp bargaining, but, at any rate, the envoys knew that the Queen, though cavilling to the ninth-part of a hair, was no trifler, and that she meant to perform whatever she should promise.

There was another exchange of speeches at the Palace of Nonesuch, on the 5th August ; and the position of affairs and the respective attitudes of the Queen and envoys were plainly characterized by the language then employed.

After an exordium about the cruelty of the Spanish tyranny and the enormous expense entailed by the war upon the Netherlands, Menin, who, as usual, was the spokesman, alluded to the difficulty which the States at last felt in maintaining themselves.

"Five thousand foot and one thousand horse," he said, "over and above the maintenance of garrisons in the towns

¹ MS. Report.

to be pledged as security to your Majesty, seemed the very least amount of succour that would be probably obtained from your royal bounty. Considering the great demonstrations of affection and promises of support, made as well by your Majesty's own letters as by the mouth of your ambassador Davison, and by our envoys De Gryse and Ortel, who have all declared publicly that your Majesty would never forsake us, the States sent us their deputies to this country in full confidence that such reasonable demands as we had been authorized to make would be satisfied."

The speaker then proceeded to declare that the offer made by the royal councillors of four thousand foot and four hundred horse, to serve during the war, together with a special force of four thousand for the relief of Antwerp, to be paid for within three months after the siege should be raised, against a concession of the cities of Flushing, Brill, Sluys, and Ostend, did not come within the limitations of the States-General. They therefore begged the Queen to enlarge her offer to the number of five thousand foot and one thousand horse, or at least to allow the envoys to conclude the treaty provisionally, and subject to approval of their constituents.¹

So soon as Menin had concluded his address, her Majesty instantly replied, with much earnestness and fluency of language.²

"Gentlemen," she said, "I will answer you upon the first point, because it touches my honour. You say that I promised you, both by letters and through my agent Davison, and also by my own lips, to assist you and never to abandon you, and that this had moved you to come to me at present. Very well, masters, do you not think I am assisting you when I am sending you four thousand foot and four hundred horse to serve during the war? Certainly, I think yes; and I say frankly that I have never been wanting to my word. No man shall ever say, with truth, that the Queen of England

¹ Discours du Sr Menin au nom des députés des Provinces unies prononcé devant S. M. à Nonsuch le 5 d'Aout,

1585. (Hague Archives, MS.)

² Réponse de la Reine au Discours précédent. (Hague Archives, MS.)

had at any time and ever so slightly failed in her promises, whether to the mightiest monarch, to republics, to gentlemen, or even to private persons of the humblest condition. Am I, then, in your opinion, forsaking you when I send you English blood, which I love, and which is my own blood, and which I am bound to defend? It seems to me, no. For my part I tell you again that I will never forsake you.

“*Sed de modo?* That is matter for agreement. You are aware, gentlemen, that I have storms to fear from many quarters—from France, Scotland, Ireland, and within my own kingdom. What would be said if I looked only on one side, and if on that side I employed all my resources. No, I will give my subjects no cause for murmuring. I know that my counsellors desire to manage matters with prudence; *sed ætatem habeo*, and you are to believe, that, of my own motion, I have resolved not to extend my offer of assistance, at present, beyond the amount already stated. But I don’t say that at another time I may not be able to do more for you. For my intention is never to abandon your cause, always to assist you, and never more to suffer any foreign nation to have dominion over you.

“It is true that you present me with two places in each of your Provinces. I thank you for them infinitely, and certainly it is a great offer. But it will be said instantly, the Queen of England wishes to embrace and devour everything; while, on the contrary, I only wish to render you assistance.¹ I believe, in truth, that if other monarchs should have this offer, they would not allow such an opportunity to escape. I do not let it slip because of fears that I entertain for any prince whatever. For to think that I am not aware—doing what I am doing—that I am embarking in a war against the King of Spain, is a great mistake. I know very well that the succour which I am affording you will offend him as much as if I should do a great deal more. But what care

¹ “—mais on droit incontinent que la Roynne d’Angleterre voudroit embrasser et gourmander tout, et

moy je ne veulx que vous assister et ayder.” &c. (Discours de la Roynne, &c. MS. *ubi supra*.)

I ?¹ Let him begin, I will answer him. For my part, I say again, that never did fear enter my heart. We must all die once. I know very well that many princes are my enemies, and are seeking my ruin ; and that where malice is joined with force, malice often arrives at its ends. But I am not so feeble a princess that I have not the means and the will to defend myself against them all. They are seeking to take my life, but it troubles me not. He who is on high has defended me until this hour, and will keep me still, for in Him do I trust.

“As to the other point, you say that your powers are not extensive enough to allow your acceptance of the offer I make you. Nevertheless, if I am not mistaken, I have remarked in passing—for princes look very close to words—that you would be content if I would give you money in place of men, and that your powers speak only of demanding a certain proportion of infantry and another of cavalry. I believe this would be, as you say, an equivalent, *secundum quod*. But I say this only because you govern yourselves so precisely by the measure of your instructions. Nevertheless I don't wish to contest these points with you. For very often *dum Romæ disputatur Saguntum perit*. Nevertheless, it would be well for you to decide ; and, in any event, I do not think it good that you should all take your departure, but that, on the contrary, you should leave some of your number here. Otherwise it would at once be said that all was broken off, and that I had chosen to do nothing for you ; and with this the bad would comfort themselves, and the good would be much discouraged.

“Touching the last point of your demand—according to which you desire a personage of quality—I know, gentlemen, that you do not always agree very well among yourselves, and that it would be good for you to have some one to effect such agreement. For this reason I have always intended, so soon as we should have made our treaty, to send a lord of name and authority to reside with you, to assist you in

¹ “——mais il ne m'en chault.”

governing, and to aid, with his advice, in the better direction of your affairs.

"Would to God that Antwerp were relieved! Certainly I should be very glad, and very well content to lose all that I am now expending if that city could be saved. I hope, nevertheless, if it can hold out six weeks longer, that we shall see something good. Already the two thousand men of General Norris have crossed, or are crossing, every day by companies. I will hasten the rest as much as possible; and I assure you, gentlemen, that I will spare no diligence. Nevertheless you may, if you choose, retire with my council, and see if together you can come to some good conclusion."¹

Thus spoke Elizabeth, like the wise, courageous, and very parsimonious princess that she was. Alas, it was too true, that Saguntum was perishing while the higgling went on at Rome. Had those two thousand under Sir John Norris and the rest of the four thousand but gone a few weeks earlier, how much happier might have been the result!

Nevertheless, it was thought in England that Antwerp would still hold out; and, meantime, a treaty for ^{12th Aug.,} its relief, in combination with another for permanent ^{1585.} assistance to the Provinces, was agreed upon between the envoys and the lords of council.

On the 12th August, Menin presented himself at Nonesuch at the head of his colleagues, and, in a formal speech, announced the arrangement which had thus been entered into, subject to the approval of the States.² Again Elizabeth, whose "tongue," in the homely phrase of the Netherlanders, "was wonderfully well hung,"³ replied with energy and ready eloquence.

"You see, gentlemen," she said, "that I have opened the door; that I am embarking once for all with you in a war against the King of Spain. Very well, I am not anxious about the matter. I hope that God will aid us, and that we

¹ Discours de la Royne, &c. (Hague Archives, MS.)

Archives, MS.)

³ Hoofd, Vervolgh, 119.

² Discours du Sr. Menin. (Hague

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shall strike a good blow in your cause. Nevertheless, I pray you, with all my heart, and by the affection you bear me, to treat my soldiers well; for they are my own Englishmen, whom I love as I do myself. Certainly it would be a great cruelty, if you should treat them ill, since they are about to hazard their lives so freely in your defence, and I am sure that my request in this regard will be received by you as it deserves.

“In the next place, as you know that I am sending, as commander of these English troops, an honest gentleman, who deserves most highly for his experience in arms, so I am also informed that you have on your side a gentleman of great valour. I pray you, therefore, that good care be taken lest there be misunderstanding between these two, which might prevent them from agreeing well together, when great exploits of war are to be taken in hand. For if that should happen—which God forbid—my succour would be rendered quite useless to you. I name Count Hohenlo, because him alone have I heard mentioned. But I pray you to make the same recommendation to all the colonels and gentlemen in your army; for I should be infinitely sad, if misadventures should arise from such a cause, for your interest and my honour are both at stake.

“In the third place, I beg you, at your return, to make a favourable report of me, and to thank the States, in my behalf, for their great offers, which I esteem so highly as to be unable to express my thanks. Tell them that I shall remember them for ever. I consider it a great honour, that from the commencement, you have ever been so faithful to me, and that with such great constancy you have preferred me to all other princes, and have chosen me for your Queen. And chiefly do I thank the gentlemen of Holland and Zeeland, who, as I have been informed, were the first who so singularly loved me. And so on my own part I will have a special care of them, and will do my best to uphold them by every possible means, as I will do all the rest who have put their trust in me. But I name Holland and Zeeland more especially,

because they have been so constant and faithful in their efforts to assist the rest in shaking off the yoke of the enemy.

"Finally, gentlemen, I beg you to assure the States that I do not decline the sovereignty of your country from any dread of the King of Spain. For I take God to witness that I fear him not ; and I hope, with the blessing of God, to make such demonstrations against him, that men shall say the Queen of England does not fear the Spaniards."¹

Elizabeth then smote herself upon the breast, and cried, with great energy, "*Illa que virgo viri* ; and is it not quite the same to you, even if I do not assume the sovereignty, since I intend to protect you, and since therefore the effects will be the same ? It is true that the sovereignty would serve to enhance my grandeur, but I am content to do without it, if you, upon your own part, will only do your duty. For myself, I promise you, in truth, that so long as I live, and even to my last sigh, I will never forsake you. Go home and tell this boldly to the States which sent you hither."²

Menin then replied with fresh expressions of thanks and compliments, and requested, in conclusion, that her Majesty would be pleased to send, as soon as possible, a personage of quality to the Netherlands.

"Gentlemen," replied Elizabeth, "I intend to do this, so soon as our treaty shall be ratified, for, in contrary case, the King of Spain, seeing your government continue on its present footing, would do nothing but laugh at us. Certainly I do not mean this year to provide him with so fine a banquet."³

¹ Reponce de Sa Majesté. (Hague Archives, MS.) "Car je jure Dieu que je ne le crains pas, et espere avecq l'ayde de Dieu faire telle preuve contre luy, qu'on dira que la Royne d'Angleterre ne craint pas les Espagnols."

² Ibid.

"Et frappant sur sa poitrine dict: *Illa que virgo viri*. Ne vous est ce pas tout ung, encoires que je ne prene pas la souverainete, puisque je vous veulx proteger, et que par la vous

aurez les mesmes affectz. Il est vray que la souverainete serviroit a moy pour grandeur. Mais je suis bien contente de ne l'avoir pas, et que seulement vous faictes le devoir requis de votre part. Car de ma part je vous prometz en verité, que si long temps que vivray, et jusques a mon dernier souspir, que je ne vous deslaisseray pas. Ce que pouvez hardiment asseurer et rapporter à Messrs. les Estatz."

³ "C'est ce que j'entens ausy de faire ausy tost que serons d'accord.

The envoys were then dismissed, and soon afterwards a portion of the deputation took their departure from the Netherlands with the proposed treaty. It was however, as we know, quite too late for Saguntum. Two days after the signing of the treaty, the remaining envoys were at the palace of Nonesuch, in conference with the Earl of Leicester, when a gentleman rushed suddenly into the apartment, exclaiming with great manifestations of anger :

"Antwerp has fallen ! A treaty has been signed with the Prince of Parma. Aldegonde is the author of it all. He is the culprit, who has betrayed us ;" with many more expressions of vehement denunciation.¹

The Queen was disappointed, but stood firm. She had been slow in taking her resolution, but she was unflinching when her mind was made up. Instead of retreating from her position, now that it became doubly dangerous, she advanced several steps nearer towards her allies. For it was obvious, if more precious time should be lost, that Holland and Zeeland would share the fate of Antwerp. Already the belief, that, with the loss of that city, all had been lost, was spreading both in the Provinces and in England, and Elizabeth felt that the time had indeed come to confront the danger.

Meantime the intrigues of the enemy in the independent

Provinces were rife. Blunt Roger Williams wrote
 23 Aug. in very plain language to Walsingham, a very few days after the capitulation of Antwerp :—

"If her Majesty means to have Holland and Zeeland," said he, "she must resolve presently. Aldegonde hath pro-

Car certes aultrement le Roy d'Espaigne, voiant la continuation de vostre gouvernement, il ne ferat que rire de nous. Et je ne lui vould donner pour ceste annee si bon banquet." (MS. Report, Hague Archives.)

¹ " — is corts daernaar by zyne Ex^{te} uyte camer van haere Ma^{te}. door eenen edelman den ledeputeerden doen bootschappen vant verlies ende overgaen der stadt van Antwerpen

aen den vyand op zeker verdrach ofte tractaet metten Prince van Parma gemaect. Daeraff principal autheur ende culpabel werde gehouden den Heere van St. Aldegonde, als de voorn. edelmann opentlyck ende haestich verclaerde, seggende dat de voorn. Aldegonde ons allen verraden hadde," &c. (MS. Report of the Envoys. Hague Archives.)

mised the enemy to bring them to compound. Here arrived already his ministers which knew all his dealings about Antwerp from first to last. Count Maurice is governed altogether by Villiers, and Villiers was never worse for the English than at this hour. To be short, the people say in general, they will accept a peace, unless her Majesty do sovereign them presently. All the men of war will be at her Highness' devotion, if they be in credit in time. What you do, it must be done presently, for I do assure your honour there is large offers presented unto them by the enemies. If her Majesty deals not roundly and resolutely with them now, it will be too late two months hence."¹

Her Majesty meant to deal roundly and resolutely. Her troops had already gone in considerable numbers. She wrote encouraging letters with her own hand to the States, imploring them not to falter now, even though the great city had fallen. She had long since promised never to desert them, and she was, if possible, more determined than ever to redeem her pledge. She especially recommended to their consideration General Norris, commander of the forces that had been despatched to the relief of Antwerp.

A most accomplished officer, sprung of a house renowned for its romantic valour, Sir John was the second of the six sons of Lord Norris of Rycot, all soldiers of high reputation, "chickens of Mars," as an old writer expressed himself. "Such a bunch of brethren for eminent achievement," said he, "was never seen. So great their states and stomachs that they often jostled with others."² Elizabeth called their mother, "her own crow ;"³ and the darkness of her hair and visage was thought not unbecoming to her martial issue, by whom it had been inherited. Daughter of Lord Williams of Tame, who had been keeper of the Tower in the time of Elizabeth's imprisonment, she had been affectionate and serviceable to the Princess in the hour of her distress, and

¹ Capt. Roger Williams to Walsingham, ¹³ August, 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

² "Martis pulli," Fuller's 'Worthies,' ed. 1811, ii. 227-228.

³ Ibid.

had been rewarded with her favour in the days of her grandeur. We shall often meet this crow-black Norris, and his younger brother Sir Edward—the most daring soldiers of their time, posters of sea and land—wherever the buffeting was closest, or adventure the wildest on ship-board or shore, for they were men who combined much of the knight-errantry of a vanishing age with the more practical and expansive spirit of adventure that characterized the new epoch.

Nor was he a stranger in the Netherlands. “The gentleman to whom we have committed the government Letter, 13
Aug. 1585. of the forces going to the relief of Antwerp,” said Elizabeth, “has already given you such proofs of his affection by the good services he has rendered you, that without recommendation on our part, he should stand already recommended. Nevertheless, in respect for his quality, the house from which he is descended, and the valour which he has manifested in your own country, we desire to tell you that we hold him dear, and that he deserves also to be dear to you.”¹

When the fall of Antwerp was certain, the Queen sent Davison, who had been for a brief period in England, back again to his post. “We have learned,” she said in the letter which she sent by that envoy, “with very great regret of the surrender of Antwerp. Fearing lest some apprehension should take possession of the people’s mind in consequence, and that some dangerous change might ensue, we send you our faithful and well-beloved Davison to represent to you how much we have your affairs at heart, and to say that we are determined to forget nothing that may be necessary to your preservation. Assure yourselves that we shall never fail to accomplish all that he may promise you in our behalf.”²

Yet, notwithstanding the gravity of the situation, the thorough discussion that had taken place of the whole matter,

¹ Lettre de la Roynne aux Etats generaux, ¹³ Aug. 1585. (Hague Archives MS.)

² Lettre de S. M. contenant credence pour le Sieur Davison, ²² Aug. 1585. (Hague Archives, MS.) ⁴ Sept.

and the enormous loss which had resulted from the money-saving insanity upon both sides, even then the busy devil of petty economy was not quite exorcised. Several precious weeks were wasted in renewed chafferings. The Queen was willing that the permanent force should now be raised to five thousand foot and one thousand horse—the additional sixteen hundred men being taken from the Antwerp relieving-force—but she insisted that the garrisons for the cautionary towns should be squeezed out of this general contingent. The States, on the contrary, were determined to screw these garrisons out of her grip, as an additional subsidy. Each party complained with reason of the other's closeness. No doubt the States were shrewd bargainers, but it would have been difficult for the sharpest Hollander that ever sent a cargo of herrings to Cadiz, to force open Elizabeth's beautiful hand when she chose to shut it close. Walsingham and Leicester were alternately driven to despair by the covetousness of the one party or the other.

It was still uncertain what "personage of quality" was to go to the Netherlands in the Queen's name, to help govern the country. Leicester had professed his readiness to risk his life, estates, and reputation, in the cause, and the States particularly desired his appointment. "The name of your Excellency is so very agreeable to this people," said they in a letter to the Earl, "as to give promise of a brief and happy end to this grievous and almost immortal war."¹ The Queen was, or affected to be, still undecided as to the appointment. While waiting week after week for the ratifications of the treaty from Holland, affairs were looking gloomy at home, and her Majesty was growing very uncertain in her temper.

"I see not her Majesty disposed to use the service of the Earl of Leicester," wrote Walsingham. "I suppose the lot of government will light on Lord Gray. I would to God the ability of his purse were answerable to his sufficiency other-

¹ Lettre des états généraux au Comte de Leicester, afin qu'il pleust à son Ex^{te} accepter le commandement de

S. M. pour venir pardeça au gouvernement du pays. (Hague Archives MS.)

wise.”¹ This was certainly a most essential deficiency on the part of Lord Gray, and it will soon be seen that the personage of quality to be selected as chief in the arduous and honourable enterprise now on foot, would be obliged to rely quite as much on that same ability of purse as upon the sufficiency of his brain or arm. The Queen did not mean to send her favourite forth to purchase anything but honour in the Netherlands; and it was not the Provinces only that were likely to struggle against her parsimony. Yet that parsimony sprang from a nobler motive than the mere love of pelf. Dangers encompassed her on every side, and while husbanding her own exchequer, she was saving her subjects’ resources. “Here we are but book-worms,” said Walsingham, “yet from sundry quarters we hear of great practices against this poor crown. The revolt in Scotland is greatly feared, and that out of hand.”²

Scotland, France, Spain, these were dangerous enemies and neighbours to a maiden Queen, who had a rebellious Ireland to deal with on one side the channel, and Alexander of Parma on the other.

Davison experienced great inconvenience and annoyance before the definite arrangements could be made. There is no doubt that the Spanish party had made great progress since the fall of Antwerp. Roger Williams was right in advising the Queen to deal “roundly and resolutely” with the States, and to “sovereign them presently.”

They had need of being sovereign, for it must be confessed that the self-government which prevailed at that moment was very like no government. The death of Orange, the treachery of Henry III., the triumphs of Parma, disastrous facts, treading rapidly upon each other, had produced a not very unnatural effect. The peace-at-any-price party was struggling hard for the ascendancy, and the Spanish partizans were doing their best to hold up to suspicion the sharp practice of the English Queen. She was even accused of underhand dealing with Spain, to the disadvantage of the Provinces;

¹ Walsingham to Davison, $\frac{5}{14}$ Sept. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

² *Ibid.*

so much had slander, anarchy, and despair, been able to effect. The States were reluctant to sign those articles with Elizabeth which were absolutely necessary to their salvation.

"In how doubtful and uncertain terms I found things at my coming hither," wrote Davison to Burghley, "how thwarted and delayed since for a resolution, and with what conditions, and for what reasons I have been finally drawn to conclude with them as I have done, your Lordship may perceive by that I have written to Mr. Secretary. The chief difficulty has rested upon the point of entertaining the garrisons within the towns of assurance, over and besides the five thousand footmen and one thousand horse."¹

This, as Davison proceeded to observe, was considered a *sine qua non* by the States, so that, under the perilous circumstances in which both countries were placed, he had felt it his duty to go forward as far as possible to meet their demands. Davison always did his work veraciously, thoroughly, and resolutely; and it was seldom that his advice, in all matters pertaining to Netherland matters, did not prove the very best that could be offered. No man knew better than he the interests and the temper of both countries.

The imperious Elizabeth was not fond of being thwarted, least of all by any thing savouring of the democratic principle, and already there was much friction between the Tudor spirit of absolutism and the rough "mechanical" nature with which it was to ally itself in the Netherlands. The economical Elizabeth was not pleased at being overreached in a bargain; and, at a moment when she thought herself doing a magnanimous act, she was vexed at the cavilling with which her generosity was received. "'Tis a manner of proceeding," said Walsingham, "not to be allowed of, and may very well be termed *mechanical*, considering that her Majesty seeketh no interest in that country—as Monsieur and the French King did—but only their good and benefit, without regard had of the expenses of her treasure and the hazard of her subjects' lives; besides throwing herself into a present war

¹ Davison to Burghley, 24 Sept. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

for their sakes with the greatest prince and potentate in Europe. But seeing the government of those countries resteth in the hands of merchants and advocates—the one regarding profit, the other standing upon vantage of quirks—there is no better fruit to be looked to from them.”¹

Yet it was, after all, no quirk in those merchants and advocates to urge that the Queen was not going to war with the great potentate for their sakes alone. To Elizabeth’s honour, she did thoroughly comprehend that the war of the Netherlands was the war of England, of Protestantism, and of European liberty, and that she could no longer, without courting her own destruction, defer taking a part in active military operations. It was no quirk, then, but solid reasoning, for the States to regard the subject in the same light. Holland and England were embarked in one boat, and were to sink or swim together. It was waste of time to wrangle so fiercely over pounds and shillings, but the fault was not to be exclusively imputed to the one side or the other. There were bitter recriminations, particularly on the part of Elizabeth, for it was not safe to touch too closely either the pride or the pocket of that frugal and despotic heroine. “The two thousand pounds promised by the States to Norris upon the muster of the two thousand volunteers,” said Walsingham, “were not paid. Her Majesty is not a little offended therewith, seeing how little care they have to yield her satisfaction, which she imputeth to proceed rather from contempt, than from necessity. If it should fall out, however, to be such as by them is pretended, then doth she conceive her bargain to be very ill made, to join her fortune with so weak and broken an estate.”² Already there were indications that the innocent might be made to suffer for the short-comings of the real culprits; nor would it be the first time, or by any means the last, for Davison to appear in the character of a scape-goat.

“Surely, sir,” continued Mr. Secretary, “it is a thing greatly to be feared that the contributions they will yield

¹ Walsingham to Davison, 23 Oct. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Ibid.

will fall not more true in paper than in payment ; which if it should so happen, it would turn some to blame, whereof you among others are to bear your part.”¹

And thus the months of September and of October wore away, and the ratifications of the treaty had not arrived from the Netherlands. Elizabeth became furious, and those of the Netherland deputation who had remained in England were at their wits' end to appease her choler. No news arrived for many weeks. Those were not the days of steam and magnetic telegraphs—inventions by which the nature of man and the aspect of history seem altered—and the Queen had nothing for it but to fret, and the envoys to concert with her ministers expedients to mitigate her spleen. Towards the end of the month, the commissioners chartered a vessel which they despatched for news to Holland. On his way across the sea the captain was hailed on the 28th October by a boat, in which one Hans Wyghans was leisurely proceeding to England with Netherland despatches dated on the 5th of the same month. This was the freshest intelligence that had yet been received.

So soon as the envoys were put in possession of the documents, they obtained an audience of the Queen. This was the last day of October. Elizabeth read her letters, ^{31 Oct.,} and listened to the apologies made by the deputies ^{1585.} for the delay with anything but a benignant countenance. Then, with much vehemence of language, and manifestations of ill-temper, she expressed her displeasure at the dilatoriness of the States. Having sent so many troops, and so many gentlemen of quality, she had considered the whole affair concluded.

“I have been unhandsomely treated,” she said, “and not as comports with a prince of my quality. My inclination for your support—because you show yourselves unworthy of so great benefits—will be entirely destroyed, unless you deal with me and mine more worthily for the future than you have done in the past. Through my great and especial affec-

¹ Walsingham to Davison, 23 Oct. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

tion for your welfare, I had ordered the Earl of Leicester to proceed to the Netherlands, and conduct your affairs ; a man of such quality as all the world knows, and one whom I love, as if he were my own brother. He was getting himself ready in all diligence, putting himself in many perils through the practices of the enemy, and if I should have reason to believe that he would not be respected there according to his due, I should be indeed offended. He and many others are not going thither to advance their own affairs, to make themselves rich, or because they have not means enough to live magnificently at home. They proceed to the Netherlands from pure affection for your cause. This is the case, too, with many other of my subjects, all dear to me, and of much worth. For I have sent a fine heap of folk thither—in all, with those his Excellency is taking with him, not under ten thousand soldiers of the English nation. This is no small succour, and no little unbarring of this realm of mine, threatened as it is with war from many quarters. Yet I am seeking no sovereignty, nor anything else prejudicial to the freedom of your country. I wish only, in your utmost need, to help you out of this lamentable war, to maintain for you liberty of conscience, and to see that law and justice are preserved.”¹

All this, and more, with great eagerness of expression and gesture, was urged by the Queen, much to the discomfiture of the envoys. In vain they attempted to modify and to explain. Their faltering excuses were swept rapidly away upon the current of royal wrath ; until at last Elizabeth stormed herself into exhaustion and comparative tranquillity. She then dismissed them with an assurance that her goodwill towards the States was not diminished, as would be found to be the case, did they not continue to prove themselves unworthy of her favour.²

It was not long, however, before the whole matter was arranged to the satisfaction of all parties. It was agreed

¹ Brief der Gedeputeerden in England aan de Staaten General, 1 Nov. 1585. (Hague Archives, MS.)

² Ibid.

that a permanent force of five thousand foot and one thousand horse should serve in the Provinces at the Queen's expense ; and that the cities of Flushing and Brill should be placed in her Majesty's hands until the entire reimbursement of the debt thus incurred by the States. Elizabeth also—at last overcoming her reluctance—agreed that the force necessary to garrison these towns should form an additional contingent, instead of being deducted from the general auxiliary force.¹

Count Maurice of Nassau had been confirmed by the States of Holland and Zeeland as permanent stadholder of those provinces. This measure excited some suspicion on the part of Leicester, who, as it was now understood, was the "personage of quality" to be sent to the Netherlands as representative of the Queen's authority. "Touching the election of Count Maurice," said the Earl, "I hope it will be no impairing of the authority heretofore allotted to me, for if it will be, I shall tarry but awhile."²

Nothing, however, could be more frank or chivalrously devoted than the language of Maurice to the Queen.

"Madam, if I have ever had occasion," he wrote, "to thank God for his benefits, I confess that it was when, receiving in all humility the letters with which it pleased your Majesty to honour me, I learned that the great disaster of my lord and father's death had not diminished the debonaire affection and favour which it has always pleased your Majesty to manifest to my father's house. It has been likewise grateful to me to learn that your Majesty, surrounded by so many great and important affairs, had been pleased to approve the command which the States-General have conferred upon me. I am indeed grieved that my actions cannot correspond with the ardent desire which I feel to serve your Majesty and these Provinces, for which I hope that my extreme youth will be accepted as an excuse. And although I find myself feeble

¹ Report of the Envoy, MS.; Articles of Treaty, &c. MS. (Hague Archives); Compare Bor, ii. 664; Hoofd,

Vervolgh, 123.

² Leicester to Davison, Nov. 18, 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

enough for the charge thus imposed upon me, yet God will assist my efforts to supply by diligence and sincere intention the defect of the other qualities requisite for my thorough discharge of my duty to the contentment of your Majesty. To fulfil these obligations, which are growing greater day by day, I trust to prove by my actions that I will never spare either my labour or life.”¹

When it was found that the important town of Flushing was required as part of the guaranty to the Queen, Maurice, as hereditary seignor and proprietor of the place—during the captivity of his elder brother in Spain—signified his concurrence in the transfer, together with the most friendly feelings towards the Earl of Leicester, and to Sir Philip Sidney, appointed English governor of the town. He wrote to Davison, whom he called “one of the best and most certain friends that the house of Nassau possessed in England,” begging that he would recommend the interests of the family to the Queen, “whose favour could do more than anything else in the world towards maintaining what remained of the dignity of their house.”² After solemn deliberation with his step-mother, Louisa de Coligny, and the other members of his family, he made a formal announcement of adhesion on the part of the House of Nassau to the arrangements concluded with the English government, and asked the benediction of God upon the treaty. While renouncing, for the moment, any compensation for his consent to the pledging of Flushing—“his patrimonial property, and a place of such great importance”—he expressed a confidence that the long services of his father, as well as those which he himself hoped to render, would meet in time with “condign recognition.” He requested the Earl of Leicester to consider the friendship which had existed between himself and the late Prince of Orange, as an hereditary affection to be continued to the children, and he entreated the Earl to do him the honour in

¹ Count Maurice to the Queen, $\frac{10}{20}$ Oct., 1585. (S. P. Office MS.) The letter is in French.

² Maurice de Nassau to Davison, 12 Oct. 1585, Brit. Mus., Galba, C. viii. 176 v MS.; same to same, 25 Oct. 1585, Galba, C. viii. 189 v, MS.

future to hold him as a son, and to extend to him counsel and authority; declaring, on his part, that he should ever deem it an honour to be allowed to call him father. And in order still more strongly to confirm his friendship, he begged Sir Philip Sidney to consider him as his brother, and as his companion in arms, promising upon his own part the most faithful friendship. In the name of Louisa de Coligny, and of his whole family, he also particularly recommended to the Queen the interests of the eldest brother of the house, Philip William, "who had been so long and so iniquitously detained captive in Spain," and begged that, in case prisoners of war of high rank should fall into the hands of the English commanders, they might be employed as a means of effecting the liberation of that much-injured Prince. He likewise desired the friendly offices of the Queen to protect the principality of Orange against the possible designs of the French monarch, and intimated that occasions might arise in which the confiscated estates of the family in Burgundy might be recovered through the influence of the Swiss cantons, particularly those of the Grisons and of Berne.

And, in conclusion, in case the Queen should please—as both Count Maurice and the Princess of Orange desired with all their hearts—to assume the sovereignty of these Provinces, she was especially entreated graciously to observe those suggestions regarding the interests of the House of Nassau, which had been made in the articles of the treaty.¹

Thus the path had been smoothed, mainly through the indefatigable energy of Davison. Yet that envoy was not able to give satisfaction to his imperious and somewhat whimsical mistress, whose zeal seemed to cool in proportion to the readiness with which the obstacles to her wishes were removed. Davison was, with reason, discontented. He had done more than any other man either in England or the Provinces, to bring about a hearty cooperation in the common cause, and to allay mutual heart-burnings and suspicions. He had also,

¹ Louisa de Coligny and Maurice de Nassau to Earl of Leicester, 19 Oct. 1585. (Brit. Mus. Galba, C. vth. 160, MS.)

owing to the negligence of the English treasurer for the Netherlands, and the niggardliness of Elizabeth, been placed in a position of great financial embarrassment. His situation was very irksome.

"I mused at the sentence you sent me," he wrote, "for I know no cause her Majesty hath to shrink at her charges hitherto. The treasure she hath yet disbursed here is not above five or six thousand pounds, besides that which I have been obliged to take up for the saving of her honour, and necessity of her service, in danger otherwise of some notable disgrace. I will not, for shame, say how I have been left here to myself."¹

The delay in the formal appointment of Leicester, and, more particularly, of the governors for the cautionary towns, was the cause of great confusion and anarchy in the transitional condition of the country. "The burden I am driven to sustain," said Davison, "doth utterly weary me. If Sir Philip Sidney were here, and if my Lord of Leicester follow not all the sooner, I would use her Majesty's liberty to return home. If her Majesty think me worthy the reputation of a poor, honest, and loyal servant, I have that contents me. For the rest, I wish

' Vivere sine invidia, mollesque inglorius annos
Exigere, amicitias et mihi jungere pares.' "

There was something almost prophetic in the tone which this faithful public servant—to whom, on more than one occasion, such hard measure was to be dealt—habitually adopted in his private letters and conversation. He did his work, but he had not his reward; and he was already weary of place without power, and industry without recognition.

"For mine own particular," he said, "I will say with the poet,

' Crede mihi, bene *qui latuit bene vixit*,
Et intra fortunam debet quisque manere suam.' "²

For, notwithstanding the avidity with which Elizabeth had

¹ Davison to ———, 11 Nov. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Ibid.

sought the cautionary towns, and the fierceness with which she had censured the tardiness of the States, she seemed now half inclined to drop the prize which she had so much coveted, and to imitate the very languor which she had so lately rebuked. "She hath what she desired," said Davison, "and might yet have more, if this content her not. Howsoever you value the places at home, they are esteemed here, by such as know them best, no little increase to her Majesty's honour, surety, and greatness, if she be as careful to keep them as happy in getting them. Of this our cold beginning doth already make me jealous."¹

Sagacious and resolute Princess as she was, she showed something of feminine caprice upon this grave occasion. Not Davison alone, but her most confidential ministers and favourites at home, were perplexed and provoked by her misplaced political coquetries. But while the alternation of her hot and cold fits drove her most devoted courtiers out of patience, there was one symptom that remained invariable throughout all her paroxysms, the rigidity with which her hand was locked. Walsingham, stealthy enough when an advantage was to be gained by subtlety, was manful and determined in his dealings with his friends; and he had more than once been offended with Elizabeth's want of frankness in these transactions.

"I find you grieved, and not without cause," he wrote to Davison, "in respect to the over thwart proceedings as well there as here. The disorders in those countries would be easily redressed if we could take a thoroughly resolute course here—a matter that men may rather pray for than hope for. It is very doubtful whether the action now in hand will be accompanied by very hard success, unless they of the country there may be drawn to bear the greatest part of the burden of the wars."²

And now the great favourite of all had received the appointment which he coveted. The Earl of Leicester was

¹ Davison to ———, 11 Nov. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Minute to Davison, 19 Nov. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

to be Commander-in-Chief of her Majesty's forces in the Netherlands, and representative of her authority in those countries, whatever that office might prove to be. The nature of his post was anomalous from the beginning. It was environed with difficulties, not the least irritating of which proceeded from the captious spirit of the Queen. The Earl was to proceed in great pomp to Holland, but the pomp was to be prepared mainly at his own expense. Besides the auxiliary forces that had been shipped during the latter period of the year, Leicester was raising a force of lancers, from four to eight hundred in number ; but to pay for that levy he was forced to mortgage his own property, while the Queen not only refused to advance ready money, but declined endorsing his bills.

It must be confessed that the Earl's courtship of Elizabeth was anything at that moment but a gentle dalliance. In those thorny regions of finance were no beds of asphodel or amaranthine bowers. There was no talk but of troopers, saltpetre, and sulphur, of books of assurance, and bills of exchange ; and the aspect of Elizabeth, when the budget was under discussion, must effectually have neutralized for the time any very tender sentiment. The sharpness with which she clipped Leicester's authority, when authority was indispensable to his dignity, and the heavy demands upon his resources that were the result of her avarice, were obstacles more than enough to the calm fruition of his triumphs. He had succeeded, in appearance at least, in the great object of his ambition, this appointment to the Netherlands ; but the appointment was no sinecure, and least of all a promising pecuniary speculation. Elizabeth had told the envoys, with reason, that she was not sending forth that man—whom she loved as a brother—in order that he might make himself rich. On the contrary, the Earl seemed likely to make himself comparatively poor before he got to the Provinces, while his political power, at the moment, did not seem of more hopeful growth.

Leicester had been determined and consistent in this great

enterprize from the beginning. He felt intensely the importance of the crisis. He saw that the time had come for swift and uncompromising action, and the impatience with which he bore the fetters imposed upon him may be easily conceived.

"The cause is such," he wrote to Walsingham, "that I had as lief be dead as be in the case I shall be in if this restraint hold for taking the oath there, or if some more authority be not granted than I see her Majesty would I should have. I trust you all will hold hard for this, or else banish me England withal. I have sent you the books to be signed by her Majesty. I beseech you return them with all haste, for I get no money till they be under seal."¹

But her Majesty would not put them under her seal, much to the favourite's discomfiture.

"Your letter yieldeth but cold answer," he wrote, two days afterwards. "Above all things yet that her Majesty doth stick at, I marvel most at her refusal to sign my book of assurance; for there passeth nothing in the earth against her profit by that act, nor any good to me but to satisfy the creditors, who were more scrupulous than needs. I did complain to her of those who did refuse to lend me money, and she was greatly offended with them. But if her Majesty were to stay this, if I were half seas over, I must of necessity come back again, for I may not go without money. I beseech, if the matter be refused by her, bestow a post on me to Harwich. I lie this night at Sir John Peters', and but for this doubt I had been to-morrow at Harwich. I pray God make you all that be counsellors plain and direct to the furtherance of all good service for her Majesty and the realm; and if it be the will of God to plague us that go, and you that tarry, for our sins, yet let us not be negligent to seek to please the Lord."²

The Earl was not negligent at any rate in seeking to please the Queen, but she was singularly hard to please. She had never been so uncertain in her humours as at this

¹ Leicester to Walsingham, 3 Dec. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Same to same, 5 Dec. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

important crisis. She knew, and had publicly stated as much, that she was "embarking in a war with the greatest potentate in Europe;" yet now that the voyage had fairly commenced, and the waves were rolling around her, she seemed anxious to put back to the shore. For there was even a whisper of peace-negotiations, than which nothing could have been more ill-timed. "I perceive by your message," said Leicester to Walsingham, "that your peace with Spain will go fast on, but this is not the way."¹ Unquestionably it was not the way, and the whisper was, for the moment at least, suppressed. Meanwhile Leicester had reached Harwich, but the post "bestowed on him," contained, as usual, but cold comfort. He was resolved, however, to go manfully forward, and do the work before him, until the enterprise should prove wholly impracticable. It is by the light afforded by the secret never-published correspondence of the period with which we are now occupied, that the true characteristics of Elizabeth, the Earl of Leicester, and other prominent personages, must be scanned, and the study is most important, for it was by those characteristics, in combination with other human elements embodied in distant parts of Christendom, that the destiny of the world was determined. In that age, more than in our own perhaps, the influence of the individual was widely and intensely felt. Historical chymistry is only rendered possible by a detection of the subtle emanations, which it was supposed would for ever elude analysis, but which survive in those secret, frequently ciphered intercommunications. Philip II., William of Orange, Queen Elizabeth, Alexander Farnese, Robert Dudley, never dreamed—when disclosing their inmost thoughts to their trusted friends at momentous epochs—that the day would come on earth when those secrets would be no longer hid from the patient enquirer after truth. Well for those whose reputations before the judgment-seat of history appear even comparatively pure, after impartial comparison of their motives with their deeds.

"For mine own part, Mr. Secretary," wrote Leicester, "I

¹ Leicester to Walsingham, 3 Dec. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

am resolved to do that which shall be fit for a poor man's honour, and honestly to obey her Majesty's commandment. Let the rest fall out to others, it shall not concern me. I mean to assemble myself to the camp, where my authority must wholly lie, and will there do that which in good reason and duty I shall be bound to do. *I am sorry that her Majesty doth deal in this sort, and is content to overthrow so willingly her own cause.* If there can be means to salve this sore, I will. If not,—I tell you what shall become of me, as truly as God lives.”¹

Yet it is remarkable, that, in spite of this “dark intimation, the Earl, after all, did not state what was to become of him if the sore was not salved. He was, however, explicit enough as to the causes of his grief, and very vehement in its manifestations. “Another matter which shall concern me deeply,” he said, “and all the subjects there, is now by you to be carefully considered, which is—money. I find that the money is already gone, and this now given to the treasurer will do no more than pay to the end of the month. I beseech you look to it, for by the Lord! I will bear no more so miserable burdens; for if I have no money to pay them, let them come home, or what else. I will not starve them, nor stay them. There was never gentleman nor general so sent out as I am; and if neither Queen nor council care to help it, but leave men desperate, as I see men shall be, that inconvenience will follow which I trust in the Lord I shall be free of.”²

He then used language about himself, singularly resembling the phraseology employed by Elizabeth concerning him, when she was scolding the Netherland commissioners for the dilatoriness and parsimony of the States.

“For mine own part,” he said, “I have taken upon me this voyage, not as a desperate nor forlorn man, but as one as well contented with his place and calling at home as any subject was ever. My cause was not, nor is, any other than the Lord's and the Queen's. If the Queen fail, yet must I trust in the Lord, *and on Him, I see, I am wholly to depend.* I

¹ Same to same, 5 Dec., 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Ibid.

can say no more, but pray to God that her Majesty never send General again as I am sent. And yet I will do what I can for her and my country."¹

The Earl had raised a choice body of lancers to accompany him to the Netherlands, but the expense of the levy had come mainly upon his own purse. The Queen had advanced five thousand pounds, which was much less than the requisite amount, while for the balance required, as well as for other necessary expenses, she obstinately declined to furnish Leicester with funds, even refusing him, at last, a temporary loan. She violently accused him of cheating her, reclaimed money which he had wrung from her on good security, and when he had repaid the sum, objected to give him a discharge. As for receiving anything by way of salary, that was quite out of the question. At that moment he would have been only too happy to be reimbursed for what he was already out of pocket. Whether Elizabeth loved Leicester as a brother, or better than a brother, may be a historical question, but it is no question at all that she loved money better than she did Leicester. Unhappy the man, whether foe or favourite, who had pecuniary transactions with her Highness.

"I am sorry," said the Earl, "that her Majesty hath so hard a conceit of me, that I should go about to cozen her, as though I had got a fee simple from her, and had it not before, or that I had not had her full release for payment of the money I borrowed. I pray God, any that did put such scruple in her, have not deceived her more than I have done. I thank God I have a clear conscience for deceiving her, and for money matters. I think I may justly say I have been the only cause of more gain to her coffers than all her chequer-men have been. But so is the hap of some, that all they do is nothing, and others that do nothing, do all, and have all the thanks. But I would this were all the grief I carry with me; but God is my comfort, and on Him I cast all, for there is no surety in this world beside. What hope of help can I have, finding her Majesty so strait with

¹ Same to same, 5 Dec., 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

myself as she is? I did trust that—the cause being hers and this realm's—if I could have gotten no money of her merchants, she would not have refused to have lent money on so easy prized land as mine, to have been gainer and no loser by it. Her Majesty, I see, will make trial of me how I love her, and what will discourage me from her service. But resolved am I that no worldly respect shall draw me back from my faithful discharge of my duty towards her, though she shall show to hate me, as it goeth very near; for I find no love or favour at all. And I pray you to remember that I have not had one penny of her Majesty towards all these charges of mine—not one penny—and, by all truth, I have already laid out above five thousand pounds. Her Majesty appointed eight thousand pounds for the levy, which was after the rate of four hundred horse, and, upon my fidelity, there is shipped, of horse of service, eight hundred, so that there ought eight thousand more to have been paid me. No general that ever went that was not paid to the uttermost of these things before he went, but had cash for his provision, which her Majesty would not allow me—not one groat. Well, let all this go, it is like I shall be the last shall bear this, and some must suffer for the people. Good Mr. Secretary, let her Majesty know this, for I deserve God-a-mercy, at the least.”¹

Leicester, to do him justice, was thoroughly alive to the importance of the crisis. On political principle, at any rate, he was a firm supporter of Protestantism, and even of Puritanism; a form of religion which Elizabeth detested, and in which, with keen instinct, she detected a mutinous element against the divine right of kings. The Earl was quite convinced of the absolute necessity that England should take up the Netherland matter most vigorously, on pain of being herself destroyed. All the most sagacious counsellors of Elizabeth were day by day more and more confirmed in this opinion, and were inclined heartily to support the new Lieutenant-General. As for Leicester himself, while fully

¹ Leicester to Walsingham, 7 Dec. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

conscious of his own merits, and of his firm intent to do his duty, he was also grateful to those who were willing to befriend him in his arduous enterprise.

"I have received a letter from my Lord Willoughby," he said, "to my seeming, as wise a letter as I have read a great while, and not unfit for her Majesty's sight. I pray God open her eyes, that they may behold her present estate indeed, *and the wonderful means that God doth offer unto her. If she lose these opportunities, who can look for other but dishonour and destruction?* My Lord Treasurer hath also written me a most hearty and comfortable letter touching this voyage, not only in showing the importance of it, both for her Majesty's own safety and the realm's, *but that the whole state of religion doth depend thereon*, and therefore doth faithfully promise his whole and best assistance for the supply of all wants. I was not a little glad to receive such a letter from him at this time."¹

And from on board the 'Amity,' ready to set sail, he expressed his thanks to Burghley, at finding him so "earnestly bent for the good supply and maintenance of us poor men sent in her Majesty's service and our country's."²

As for Walsingham, earnestly a defender of the Netherland cause from the beginning, he was wearied and disgusted with fighting against the Queen's parsimony and caprice. "He is utterly discouraged," said Leicester to Burghley, "to deal any more in these causes. I pray God your Lordship grow not so too; for then all will to the ground, on my poor side especially."³

And to Sir Francis himself, he wrote, even as his vessel was casting off her moorings:—"I am sorry, Mr. Secretary," he said, "to find you so discouraged, and that her Majesty doth deem you so partial. And yet my suits to her Majesty have not of late been so many nor great, while the greatest, I am sure, are for her Majesty's own service. For my part, I will discharge my duty as far as my poor ability and capacity shall serve, and if I shall not have her gracious and princely

¹ Leicester to Walsingham, 7 Dec. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Leicester to Burghley, 9 Dec. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ *Ibid.*

support and supply, the lack will be to us, for the present, but the shame and dishonour will be hers."¹

And with these parting words the Earl committed himself to the December seas.

Davison had been meantime doing his best to prepare the way in the Netherlands for the reception of the English administration. What man could do, without money and without authority, he had done. The governors for Flushing and the Brill, Sir Philip Sidney and Sir Thomas Cecil, eldest son of Lord Burghley, had been appointed, but had not arrived. Their coming was anxiously looked for, as during the interval the condition of the garrisons was deplorable. The English treasurer—by some unaccountable and unpardonable negligence, for which it is to be feared the Queen was herself to blame—was not upon the spot, and Davison was driven out of his wits to devise expedients to save the soldiers from starving.

"Your Lordship has seen by my former letters," wrote the Ambassador to Burghley from Flushing, "what shift I have been driven to for the relief of this garrison here, 11 Nov. left *à l'abandon*; without which mean they had all 1585. fallen into wild and shameful disorder, to her Majesty's great disgrace and overthrow of her service. I am compelled, unless I would see the poor men famish, and her Majesty dishonoured, to try my poor credit for them."²

General Sir John Norris was in the Betuwe, threatening Nymegen, a town which he found "not so flexible as he had hoped;"³ and, as he had but two thousand men, while Alexander Farnese was thought to be marching upon him with ten thousand, his position caused great anxiety. Meantime, his brother, Sir Edward, a hot-headed and somewhat wilful young man, who "thought that all was too little for him," was giving the sober Davison a good deal of trouble.⁴ He had got himself into a quarrel, both with that envoy and

¹ Leicester to Walsingham, 9 Dec. | 1585. Brit. Mus. (Galba, C. viii. p. 217, MS.)

² Davison to Burghley 11 Nov. |

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

with Roger Williams, by claiming the right to control military matters in Flushing until the arrival of Sidney. "If Sir Thomas and Sir Philip," said Davison, "do not make choice of more discreet, staid, and expert commanders than those thrust into these places by Mr. Norris, they will do themselves a great deal of worry, and her Majesty a great deal of hurt."¹

As might naturally be expected, the lamentable condition of the English soldiers, unpaid and starving—according to the report of the Queen's envoy himself—exercised anything but a salutary influence upon the minds of the Netherlanders and perpetually fed the hopes of the Spanish partizans that a composition with Philip and Parma would yet take place. On the other hand, the States had been far more liberal in raising funds than the Queen had shown herself to be, and were somewhat indignant at being perpetually taunted with parsimony by her agents. Davison was offended by the injustice of Norris in this regard. "The complaints which the General hath made of the States to her Majesty," said he, "are without cause, and I think, when your Lordship shall examine it well, you will find it no little sum they have already disbursed unto him for their part. Wherein, nevertheless, if they had been looked into, they were somewhat the more excusable, considering how ill our people at her Majesty's entertainment were satisfied hitherto—a thing that doth much prejudice her reputation, and hurt her service."²

At last, however, the die had been cast. The Queen, although rejecting the proposed sovereignty of the Netherlands, had espoused their cause, by solemn treaty of alliance, and thereby had thrown down the gauntlet to Spain. She deemed it necessary, therefore, out of respect for the opinions of mankind, to issue a manifesto of her motives to the world. The document was published, simultaneously in Dutch, French, English, and Italian.³

In this solemn state-paper she spoke of the responsibility

¹ Davison to Burghley, MS. last cited.

² Ibid.

³ The Declaration is given in Bor, ii. 667-671.

of princes to the Almighty, of the ancient friendship between England and the Netherlands, of the cruelty and tyranny of the Spaniards, of their violation of the liberties of the Provinces, of their hanging, beheading, banishing without law and against justice, in the space of a few months, so many of the highest nobles in the land. Although in the beginning of the cruel persecution, the pretext had been the maintenance of the Catholic religion, yet it was affirmed they had not failed to exercise their barbarity upon Catholics also, and even upon ecclesiastics. Of the principal persons put to death, no one, it was asserted, had been more devoted to the ancient church than was the brave Count Egmont, who, for his famous victories in the service of Spain, could never be forgotten in veracious history any more than could be the cruelty of his execution.

The land had been made desolate, continued the Queen, with fire, sword, famine, and murder. These misfortunes had ever been bitterly deplored by friendly nations, and none could more truly regret such sufferings than did the English, the oldest allies, and familiar neighbours of the Provinces, who had been as close to them in the olden time by community of connexion and language, as man and wife. She declared that she had frequently, by amicable embassies, warned her brother of Spain—speaking to him like a good, dear sister and neighbour—that unless he restrained the cruelty of his governors and their soldiers, he was sure to force his Provinces into allegiance to some other power. She expressed the danger in which she should be placed if the Spaniards succeeded in establishing their absolute government in the Netherlands, from which position their attacks upon England would be incessant. She spoke of the enterprise favoured and set on foot by the Pope and by Spain, against the kingdom of Ireland. She alluded to the dismissal of the Spanish envoy, Don Bernardino de Mendoza, who had been treated by her with great regard for a long time, but who had been afterwards discovered in league with certain ill-disposed and seditious subjects of hers, and with publicly

condemned traitors. That envoy had arranged a plot according to which, as appeared by his secret despatches, an invasion of England by a force of men, coming partly from Spain, and partly from the Netherlands, might be successfully managed, and he had even noted down the necessary number of ships and men, with various other details. Some of the conspirators had fled, she observed, and were now consorting with Mendoza, who, after his expulsion from England, had been appointed ambassador in Paris ; while some had been arrested, and had confessed the plot. So soon as this envoy had been discovered to be the chief of a rebellion and projected invasion, the Queen had requested him, she said, to leave the kingdom within a reasonable time, as one who was the object of deadly hatred to the English people. She had then sent an agent to Spain, in order to explain the whole transaction. That agent had not been allowed even to deliver despatches to the King.

When the French had sought, at a previous period, to establish their authority in Scotland, even as the Spaniards had attempted to do in the Netherlands, and through the enormous ambition of the House of Guise, to undertake the invasion of her kingdom, she had frustrated their plots, even as she meant to suppress these Spanish conspiracies. She spoke of the Prince of Parma as more disposed by nature to mercy and humanity than preceding governors had been, but as unable to restrain the blood-thirstiness of Spaniards, increased by long indulgence. She avowed, in assuming the protection of the Netherlands, and in sending her troops to those countries, but three objects : peace, founded upon the recognition of religious freedom in the Provinces, restoration of their ancient political liberties, and security for England. Never could there be tranquillity for her own realm until these neighbouring countries were tranquil. These were her ends and aims, despite all that slanderous tongues might invent. The world, she observed, was overflowing with blasphemous libels, calumnies, scandalous pamphlets ; for never had the Devil been so busy in supplying evil tongues

with venom against the professors of the Christian religion.

She added that in a pamphlet, ascribed to the Archbishop of Milan, just published, she had been accused of ingratitude to the King of Spain, and of plots to take the life of Alexander Farnese. In answer to the first charge, she willingly acknowledged her obligations to the King of Spain during the reign of her sister. She pronounced it, however, an absolute falsehood that he had ever saved her life, as if she had ever been condemned to death. She likewise denied earnestly the charge regarding the Prince of Parma. She protested herself incapable of such a crime, besides declaring that he had never given her offence. On the contrary, he was a man whom she had ever honoured for the rare qualities that she had noted in him, and for which he had deservedly acquired a high reputation.¹

Such, in brief analysis, was the memorable Declaration of Elizabeth in favour of the Netherlands—a document which was a hardly disguised proclamation of war against Philip. In no age of the world could an unequivocal agreement to assist rebellious subjects, with men and money, against their sovereign, be considered otherwise than as a hostile demonstration. The King of Spain so regarded the movement, and forthwith issued a decree, ordering the seizure of all English as well as all Netherland vessels within his ports, together with the arrest of persons, and confiscation of property.

Subsequently to the publication of the Queen's memorial, and before the departure of the Earl of Leicester, Sir Philip Sidney having received his appointment, together with the rank of general of cavalry, arrived in the Isle of Walcheren, as governor of Flushing, at the head of a portion of the English contingent.

It is impossible not to contemplate with affection so radiant a figure, shining through the cold mists of that Zeeland winter, and that distant and disastrous epoch. There is hardly a character in history upon which the imagination

¹ Declaration, *ubi sup.*

can dwell with more unalloyed delight. Not in romantic fiction was there ever created a more attractive incarnation of martial valour, poetic genius, and purity of heart. If the mocking spirit of the soldier of Lepanto could "smile chivalry away," the name alone of his English contemporary is potent enough to conjure it back again, so long as humanity is alive to the nobler impulses.

"I cannot pass him over in silence," says a dusty chronicler, "that glorious star, that lively pattern of virtue, and the lovely joy of all the learned sort. It was God's will that he should be born into the world, even to show unto our age a sample of ancient virtue." The descendant of an ancient Norman race, and allied to many of the proudest nobles in England, Sidney himself was but a commoner, a private individual, a soldier of fortune. He was now in his thirty-second year, and should have been foremost among the statesmen of Elizabeth, had it not been, according to Lord Bacon, a maxim of the Cecils, that "able men should be by design and of purpose suppressed." Whatever of truth there may have been in the bitter remark, it is certainly strange that a man so gifted as Sidney—of whom his father-in-law Walsingham had declared, that "although he had influence in all countries, and a hand upon all affairs, his Philip did far overshoot him with his own bow"¹—should have passed so much of his life in retirement, or in comparatively insignificant employments. The Queen, as he himself observed, was most apt to interpret everything to his disadvantage. Among those who knew him well, there seems never to have been a dissenting voice. His father, Sir Henry Sidney, lord-deputy of Ireland, and president of Wales, a statesman of accomplishments and experience, called him "*lumen familiæ suæ*," and said of him, with pardonable pride, "that he had the most virtues which he had ever found in any man; that he was the very formular that all well-disposed young gentlemen do form their manners and life by."

¹ Camden's 'Britannia' (1637) p. 329.

² Life of Sidney, by Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke, edited by Sir E. Brydges, p. 23.

The learned Hubert Languet, companion of Melancthon, tried friend of William the Silent, was his fervent admirer and correspondent. The great Prince of Orange held him in high esteem, and sent word to Queen Elizabeth, that having himself been an actor in the most important affairs of Europe, and acquainted with her foremost men, he could "pledge his credit" that her Majesty had one of the ripest and greatest councillors of state in Sir Philip Sidney that lived in Europe."¹

The incidents of his brief and brilliant life, up to his arrival upon the fatal soil of the Netherlands, are too well known to need recalling. Adorned with the best culture that, in a learned age, could be obtained in the best seminaries of his native country, where, during childhood and youth, he had been distinguished for a "lovely and familiar gravity beyond his years," he rapidly acquired the admiration of his comrades and the esteem of all his teachers.

Travelling for three years, he made the acquaintance and gained the personal regard of such opposite characters as Charles IX. of France, Henry of Navarre, Don John of Austria, and William of Orange, and perfected his accomplishments by residence and study, alternately, in courts, camps, and learned universities. He was in Paris during the memorable days of August, 1572, and narrowly escaped perishing in the St. Bartholomew Massacre. On his return, he was, for a brief period, the idol of the English court, which, it was said, "was maimed without his company."² At the age of twenty-one he was appointed special envoy to Vienna, ostensibly for the purpose of congratulating the Emperor Rudolph upon his accession, but in reality that he might take the opportunity of sounding the secret purposes of the Protestant princes of Germany, in regard to the great contest of the age. In this mission, young as he was, he acquitted himself, not only to the satisfaction, but to the admiration of Walsingham, certainly a master himself in

¹ Sidney Papers, edited by Collins, i. 246.

² Brooke, p. 16, *seq.*

³ Fuller's 'Worthies,' i. 499, ed. 1811.

that occult science, the diplomacy of the sixteenth century. "There hath not been," said he, "any gentleman, I am sure, that hath gone through so honourable a charge with as great commendations as he."¹

When the memorable marriage-project of Queen Elizabeth with Anjou seemed about to take effect, he denounced the scheme in a most spirited and candid letter, addressed to her Majesty; nor is it recorded that the Queen was offended with his frankness. Indeed we are informed that "although he found a sweet stream of sovereign humours in that well-tempered lady to run against him, yet found he safety in herself against that selfness which appeared to threaten him in her."² Whatever this might mean, translated out of euphuism into English, it is certain that his conduct was regarded with small favour by the court-grandeess, by whom "worth, duty, and justice, were looked upon with no other eyes than Lamia's."³

The difficulty of swimming against that sweet stream of sovereign humours in the well-tempered Elizabeth, was aggravated by his quarrel, at this period, with the magnificent Oxford. A dispute at a tennis-court, where many courtiers and foreigners were looking on, proceeded rapidly from one extremity to another. The Earl commanded Sir Philip to leave the place. Sir Philip responded, that if he were of a mind that he should go, he himself was of a mind that he should remain; adding that if he had entreated, where he had no right to command, he might have done more than "with the scourge of fury." "This answer," says Fulke Greville, in a style worthy of Don Adriano de Armado, "did, like a bellows, blowing up the sparks of excess already kindled, make my lord scornfully call Sir Philip by the name of puppy. In which progress of heat, as the tempest grew more and more vehement within, so did their hearts breathe out their perturbations in a more loud and shrill accent;"⁴ and so on; but the impending duel was the next day forbidden by express command of her Majesty. Sidney, not feeling the

¹ Naunton, 'Regalia,' p. 63.
² Ibid.

³ Brooke, p. 51.
⁴ Brooke, p. 53.

full force of the royal homily upon the necessity of great deference from gentlemen to their superiors in rank, in order to protect all orders from the insults of plebeians, soon afterwards retired from the court. To his sylvan seclusion the world owes the pastoral and chivalrous romance of the 'Arcadia,' and to the pompous Earl, in consequence, an emotion of gratitude. Nevertheless, it was in him to do, rather than to write, and humanity seems defrauded, when forced to accept the 'Arcadia,' the 'Defence of Poesy,' and the 'Astrophel and Stella,' in discharge of its claims upon so great and pure a soul.

Notwithstanding this disagreeable affair, and despite the memorable letter against Anjou, Sir Philip suddenly flashes upon us again, as one of the four challengers in a tournament to honour the Duke's presence in England. A vision of him in blue gilded armour—with horses caparisoned in cloth of gold, pearl-embroidered, attended by pages in cloth of silver, Venetian hose, laced hats, and by gentlemen, yeomen, and trumpeters, in yellow velvet cassocks, buskins, and feathers—as one of "the four fostered children of virtuous desire" (to wit, Anjou) storming "the castle of perfect Beauty"¹ (to wit, Queen Elizabeth, ætatis 47) rises out of the cloud-dusts of ancient chronicle for a moment, and then vanishes into air again.

"Having that day his hand, his horse, his lance,
Guided so well that they attained the prize
Both in the judgment of our English eyes,
But of some sent by that sweet enemy, France,"

as he chivalrously sings, he soon afterwards felt inclined for wider fields of honourable adventure. It was impossible that knight-errant so true should not feel keenest sympathy with an oppressed people struggling against such odds, as the Netherlanders were doing in their contest with Spain. So soon as the treaty with England was arranged, it was his ambition to take part in the dark and dangerous enterprise, and, being son-in-law to Walsingham and nephew to Leicester, he had a

¹ Stowe's Continuation of Holinshed, iv. 436, *seq.*

right to believe that his talents and character would, on this occasion, be recognised. But, like his "very friend," Lord Willoughby, he was "not of the genus Reptilia, and could neither creep nor crouch,"¹ and he failed, as usual, to win his way to the Queen's favour. The governorship of Flushing was denied him, and, stung to the heart by such neglect, he determined to seek his fortune beyond the seas.

"Sir Philip hath taken a very hard resolution," wrote Walsingham to Davison, "to accompany Sir Francis Drake in this voyage, moved thereto for that he saw her Majesty disposed to commit the charge of Flushing unto some other; which he reputed would fall out greatly to his disgrace, to see another preferred before him, both for birth and judgment inferior unto him. The despair thereof and the disgrace that he doubted he should receive have carried him into a different course."²

The Queen, however, relenting at last, interfered to frustrate his design. Having thus balked his ambition in the Indian seas, she felt pledged to offer him the employment which he had originally solicited, and she accordingly conferred upon him the governorship of Flushing, with the rank of general of horse, under the Earl of Leicester. In the latter part of November, he cast anchor, in the midst of a violent storm, at Rammekins, and thence came to the city of his government. Young, and looking even younger than his years—"not only of an excellent wit, but extremely beautiful of face"³—with delicately chiselled Anglo-Norman features, smooth fair cheek, a faint moustache, blue eyes, and a mass of amber-coloured hair; such was the author of 'Arcadia' and the governor of Flushing.

And thus an Anglo-Norman representative of ancient race had come back to the home of his ancestors. Scholar, poet, knight-errant, finished gentleman, he aptly typified the result of seven centuries of civilization upon the wild Danish pirate. For among those very quicksands of storm-beaten Walachria

¹ Naunton, 'Regalia,' p. 66.

² Walsingham to Davison, 13 Sept. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Expression of Aubrey, cited by Gray, *Life of Sidney*, 61.

that wondrous Normandy first came into existence whose wings were to sweep over all the high places of Christendom. Out of these creeks, lagunes, and almost inaccessible sand-banks, those bold freebooters sailed forth on their forays against England, France, and other adjacent countries, and here they brought and buried the booty of many a wild adventure. Here, at a later day, Rollo the Dane had that memorable dream of leprosy,¹ the cure of which was the conversion of North Gaul into Normandy, of Pagans into Christians, and the subsequent conquest of every throne in Christendom from Ultima Thule to Byzantium. And now the descendant of those early freebooters had come back to the spot, at a moment when a wider and even more imperial swoop was to be made by their modern representatives. For the sea-kings of the sixteenth century—the Drakes, Hawkinses, Frobishers, Raleighs, Cavendishes—the De Moors, Heemskerks, Barendts—all sprung of the old pirate-lineage, whether called Englanders or Hollanders, and instinct with the same hereditary love of adventure, were about to wrestle with ancient tyrannies, to explore the most inaccessible regions, and to establish new commonwealths in worlds undreamed of by their ancestors—to accomplish, in short, more wondrous feats than had been attempted by the Knuts, and Rollos, Rurics, Rogers, and Tancreds, of an earlier age.

The place which Sidney was appointed to govern was one of great military and commercial importance. Flushing was the key to the navigation of the North Seas, ever since the disastrous storm of a century before, in which a great trading city on the outermost verge of the island had been swallowed bodily by the ocean.² The Emperor had so thoroughly recognized its value, as to make special mention of the necessity for its preservation, in his private instructions to Philip, and now the Queen of England had confided it to one who was competent to appreciate and to defend the prize. "How great a jewel this place (Flushing) is to the crown of

¹ Gulociardini, 'Description de tous les Pays Bas,' p. 354.

² Guiccardini, *in voce*.

England," wrote Sidney to his Uncle Leicester, "and to the Queen's safety, I need not now write it to your lordship, who knows it so well. Yet I must needs say, the better I know it, the more I find the preciousness of it."¹

He did not enter into his government, however, with much pomp and circumstance, but came afoot into Flushing in the midst of winter and foul weather. "Driven to land at Rammekins," said he, "because the wind began to rise in such sort as our mariners durst not enter the town, I came from thence with as dirty a walk as ever poor governor entered his charge withal."² But he was cordially welcomed, nor did he arrive by any means too soon.

"I find the people very glad of our coming," he said, "and promise myself as much surety in keeping this town, as popular good-will, gotten by light hopes, and by as slight conceits, may breed; for indeed the garrison is far too weak to command by authority, which is pity. . . . I think, truly, that if my coming had been longer delayed, some alteration would have followed; for the truth is, this people is weary of war, and if they do not see such a course taken as may be likely to defend them, they will in a sudden give over the cause. . . . All will be lost if government be not presently used."³

He expressed much anxiety for the arrival of his uncle, with which sentiments he assured the Earl that the Netherlanders fully sympathized. "Your Lordship's coming," he said, "is as much longed for as Messias is of the Jews. It is indeed most necessary that your Lordship make great speed to reform both the Dutch and English abuses."⁴

¹ Sir P. Sidney to Earl of Leicester, 22 Nov. 1585. Brit. Mus. Galba, C. viii. p. 213, MS.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

CHAPTER VII.

The Earl of Leicester — His Triumphal Entrance into Holland — English Spies about him — Importance of Holland to England — Spanish Schemes for invading England — Letter of the Grand Commander — Perilous Position of England — True Nature of the Contest — Wealth and Strength of the Provinces — Power of the Dutch and English People — Affection of the Hollanders for the Queen — Secret Purposes of Leicester — Wretched Condition of English Troops — The Nassaus and Hohenlo — The Earl's Opinion of them — Clerk and Killigrew — Interview with the States — Government General offered to the Earl — Discussions on the Subject — The Earl accepts the Office — His Ambition and Mistakes — His Installation at the Hague — Intimations of the Queen's Displeasure — Deprecatory Letters of Leicester — Davison's Mission to England — Queen's Anger and Jealousy — Her angry Letters to the Earl and the States — Arrival of Davison — Stormy Interview with the Queen — The second one is calmer — Queen's Wrath somewhat mitigated — Mission of Heneage to the States — Shirley sent to England by the Earl — His Interview with Elizabeth — Leicester's Letters to his Friends — Paltry Conduct of the Earl to Davison — He excuses himself at Davison's Expense — His Letter to Burghley — Effect of the Queen's Letters to the States — Suspicion and Discontent in Holland — States excuse their Conduct to the Queen — Leicester discredited in Holland — Evil Consequences to Holland and England — Magic Effect of a Letter from Leicester — The Queen appeased — Her Letters to the States and the Earl — She permits the granted Authority — Unhappy Results of the Queen's Course — Her variable Moods — She attempts to deceive Walsingham — Her Injustice to Heneage — His Perplexity and Distress — Humiliating Position of Leicester — His melancholy Letters to the Queen — He receives a little Consolation — And writes more cheerfully — The Queen is more benignant — The States less contented than the Earl — His Quarrels with them begin.

At last the Earl of Leicester came. Embarking at Harwich, with a fleet of fifty ships, and attended "by the flower and chief gallants of England"¹ — the Lords

Dec. 9, 19,

1585.

Sheffield, Willoughby, North, Burroughs, Sir Gervase Clifton, Sir William Russell, Sir Robert Sidney, and others among the number — the new lieutenant-general of the English forces in the Netherlands arrived on the 19th December, 1585, at Flushing. His nephew, Sir Philip Sidney, and Count Maurice of Nassau, with a body of troops and a great procession of

¹ Stowe, 711.

civil functionaries, were in readiness to receive him, and to escort him to the lodgings prepared for him.¹

Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, was then fifty-four years of age. There are few personages in English history whose adventures, real or fictitious, have been made more familiar to the world than his have been, or whose individuality has been presented in more picturesque fashion, by chronicle, tragedy, or romance. Born in the same day of the month and hour of the day with the Queen, but two years before her birth, the supposed synastry of their destinies² might partly account, in that age of astrological superstition, for the influence which he perpetually exerted. They had, moreover, been fellow-prisoners together, in the commencement of the reign of Mary, and it is possible that he may have been the medium through which the indulgent expressions of Philip II. were conveyed to the Princess Elizabeth.

His grandfather, John Dudley, that "caterpillar of the commonwealth," who lost his head in the first year of Henry VIII. as a reward for the "grist which he brought to the mill³ of Henry VII. ; his father, the mighty Duke of Northumberland, who rose out of the wreck of an obscure and ruined family to almost regal power, only to perish, like his predecessor, upon the scaffold, had bequeathed him nothing save rapacity, ambition, and the genius to succeed. But Elizabeth seemed to ascend the throne only to bestow gifts upon her favourite. Baronies and earldoms, stars and garters, manors and monopolies, castles and forests, church livings and college chancellorships, advowsons and sinecures, emoluments and dignities, the most copious and the most exalted, were conferred upon him in breathless succession. Wine, oil, currants, velvets, ecclesiastical benefices, university headships, licences to preach, to teach, to ride, to sail, to pick and to steal, all brought "grist to his mill." His grandfather, "the horse leach and shearer," never filled his coffers more rapidly than did Lord Robert, the fortunate courtier. Of his

¹ Bor, ii. 684, 685; Hoofd, Vervolg, 133, 134; Wagenaar, viii. 112, *seq.*; Stowe, 711; Strada, ii. 408, 409.

² Naunton, 34, and *note*.

³ Expression of Lord Bacon.

early wedlock with the ill-starred Amy Robsart, of his nuptial projects with the Queen, of his subsequent marriages and mock-marriages with Douglas Sheffield and Lettice of Essex, of his plottings, poisonings, imaginary or otherwise, of his countless intrigues, amatory and political—of that luxuriant, creeping, flaunting, all-pervading existence which struck its fibres into the mould, and coiled itself through the whole fabric, of Elizabeth's life and reign—of all this the world has long known too much to render a repetition needful here. The inmost nature and the secret deeds of a man placed so high by wealth and station, can be seen but darkly through the glass of contemporary record. There was no tribunal to sit upon his guilt. A grandee could be judged only when no longer a favourite, and the infatuation of Elizabeth for Leicester terminated only with his life. He stood now upon the soil of the Netherlands in the character of a "Messiah," yet he had been charged with crimes sufficient to send twenty humbler malefactors to the gibbet. "I think," said a most malignant arraigner of the man, in a published pamphlet, "that the Earl of Leicester hath more blood lying upon his head at this day, crying for vengeance, than ever had private man before, were he never so wicked."¹

Certainly the mass of misdemeanours and infamies hurled at the head of the favourite by that "green-coated Jesuit," father Parsons, under the title of '*Leycester's Commonwealth*,' were never accepted as literal verities; yet the value of the precept, to calumniate boldly, with the certainty that much of the calumny would last for ever, was never better illustrated than in the case of Robert Dudley. Besides the lesser delinquencies of filling his purse by the sale of honours and dignities, by violent ejectments from land, fraudulent titles, rapacious enclosures of commons, by taking bribes for matters of justice, grace, and supplication to the royal authority, he was accused of forging various letters to the Queen, often to ruin his political adversaries, and of

¹ '*Leycester's Commonwealth*: conceived, spoken, and published with most earnest protestation of all dutiful good-will and affection towards the

realm, for whose good only it is made common to many (by Robt. Parsons),' 4to. London. 1641.

plottings to entrap them into conspiracies, playing first the comrade and then the informer. The list of his murders and attempts to murder was almost endless. "His lordship hath a special fortune," saith the Jesuit, "that when he desireth any woman's favour, whatsoever person standeth in his way hath the luck to die quickly."¹ He was said to have poisoned Alice Drayton, Lady Lennox, Lord Sussex, Sir Nicholas Throgmorton, Lord Sheffield, whose widow he married and then poisoned, Lord Essex, whose widow he also married, and intended to poison, but who was said to have subsequently poisoned him—besides murders or schemes for murder of various other individuals, both French and English.² "He was a rare artist in poison," said Sir Robert Naunton,³ and certainly not Cæsar Borgia, nor his father or sister, was more accomplished in that difficult profession than was Dudley, if half the charges against him could be believed. Fortunately for his fame, many of them were proved to be false. Sir Henry Sidney, lord deputy of Ireland, at the time of the death of Lord Essex, having caused a diligent inquiry to be made into that dark affair, wrote to the council that it was usual for the Earl to fall into a bloody flux when disturbed in his mind, and that his body when opened showed no signs of poison.⁴ It is true that Sir Henry, although an honourable man, was Leicester's brother-in-law, and that perhaps an autopsy was not conducted at that day in Ireland on very scientific principles.

His participation in the strange death of his first wife was a matter of current belief among his contemporaries. "He is infamed by the death of his wife," said Burghley,⁵ and the tale has since become so interwoven with classic and legendary fiction, as well as with more authentic history, that the phantom of the murdered Amy Robsart is sure to arise at every mention of the Earl's name. Yet a coroner's inquest—as appears from his own secret correspondence with his relative and agent at Cumnor—was immediately and persistently demanded by Dudley. A jury was impannelled—every man

¹ Leicester's 'Commonwealth,' *ut sup.*

² Sydney Papers, by Collins, i. 48.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Naunton, 'Regalia,' 43, 44.

⁵ Lodge, ii. 302.

of them a stranger to him, and some of them enemies. Antony Forster, Appleyard, and Arthur Robsart, brother-in-law and brother of the lady, were present, according to Dudley's special request; "and if more of her friends could have been sent," said he, "I would have sent them;" but with all their minuteness of inquiry, "they could find," wrote Blount, "no presumptions of evil," although he expressed a suspicion that "some of the jurymen were sorry that they could not." That the unfortunate lady was killed by a fall down stairs was all that could be made of it by a coroner's inquest, rather hostile than otherwise, and urged to rigorous investigation by the supposed culprit himself.¹ Nevertheless, the calumny has endured for three centuries, and is likely to survive as many more.

Whatever crimes Dudley may have committed in the course of his career, there is no doubt whatever that he was the most abused man in Europe. He had been deeply wounded by the Jesuit's artful publication, in which all the misdeeds with which he was falsely or justly charged were drawn up in awful array, in a form half colloquial, half judicial. "You had better give some contentment to my Lord Leicester," wrote the French envoy from London to his government, "on account of the bitter feelings excited in him by these villainous books lately written against him."

The Earl himself ascribed these calumnies to the Jesuits, to the Guise faction, and particularly to the Queen of Scots. He was said, in consequence, to have vowed an eternal hatred to that most unfortunate and most intriguing Princess. "Leicester has lately told a friend," wrote Charles Paget, "that he will persecute you to the uttermost, for that he supposeth your Majesty to be privy to the setting forth of the book against him."² Nevertheless, calumniated or innocent,

¹ Abstract of the Correspondence preserved in the Pepysian Library at Cambridge, between Lord Robert Dudley and Thomas Blount, an agent of his at Cumnor, during the inquest held on Amy Robsart, published in Craik, 'Romance of the Peerage.'

² — "il sera bon de donner quel-

que contentement au dict sieur Conte de Lestre pour ce qu'il a sy affection de ces vilains livres fetz contre luy," &c. ('Castlenau-Mauviessiere à M. de Brulart,' Bienne, MS.)

³ Charles Paget to Queen of Scots, 14 Jan. 1585, in Murdin, ii. 437.

he was at least triumphant over calumny. Nothing could shake his hold upon Elizabeth's affections. The Queen scorned but resented the malignant attacks upon the reputation of her favourite. She declared "before God and in her conscience, that she knew the libels against him to be most scandalous, and such as none but an incarnate devil himself could dream to be true." His power, founded not upon genius nor virtue, but upon woman's caprice, shone serenely above the gulf where there had been so many shipwrecks. "I am now passing into another world," said Sussex, upon his death-bed, to his friends, "and I must leave you to your fortunes ; but beware of the gipsy, or he will be too hard for you. You know not the beast so well as I do."¹

The "gipsy," as he had been called from his dark complexion, had been renowned in youth for the beauty of his person, being "tall and singularly well-featured, of a sweet aspect, but high foreheaded, which was of no discommendation," according to Naunton. The Queen, who had the passion of her father for tall and proper men, was easier won by externals, from her youth even to the days of her dotage, than befitted so very sagacious a personage. Chamberlains, squires of the body, carvers, cup-bearers, gentlemen-ushers, porters, could obtain neither place nor favour at court, unless distinguished for stature, strength, or extraordinary activity. To lose a tooth had been known to cause the loss of a place, and the excellent constitution of leg which helped Sir Christopher Hatton into the chancellorship, was not more remarkable perhaps than the success of similar endowments in other contemporaries. Leicester, although stately and imposing, had passed his summer solstice. A big bulky man, with a long red face, a bald head, a defiant somewhat sinister eye, a high nose, and a little torrent of foam-white curly beard, he was still magnificent in costume. Rustling in satin and feathers, with jewels in his ears, and his velvet toque stuck as airily as ever upon the side of his head, he amazed the honest Hollanders, who had been used to less gorgeous chieftains.

¹ Naunton, p. 49.

"Every body is wondering at the great magnificence and splendour of his clothes,"¹ said the plain chronicler of Utrecht. For, not much more than a year before, Fulke Greville had met at Delft a man whose external adornments were simpler ; a somewhat slip-shod personage, whom he thus pourtrayed :— "His uppermost garment was a gown," said the euphuistic Fulke, "yet such as, I confidently affirm, a mean-born student of our Inns of Court would not have been well disposed to walk the streets in. Unbuttoned his doublet was, and of like precious matter and form to the other. His waistcoat, which showed itself under it, not unlike the best sort of those woollen knit ones which our ordinary barge-watermen row us in. His company about him, the burgesses of that beer-brewing town. *No external sign of degree could have discovered the inequality of his worth or estate from that multitude.* Nevertheless, upon conversing with him, there *was an outward passage of inward greatness.*"²

Of a certainty there must have been an outward passage of inward greatness about him ; for the individual in unbuttoned doublet and bargeman's waistcoat, was no other than *William the Silent*. A different kind of leader had now descended among those rebels, yet it would be a great mistake to deny the capacity or vigorous intentions of the magnificent Earl, who certainly was like to find himself in a more difficult and responsible situation than any he had yet occupied.

And now began a triumphal progress through the land, with a series of mighty banquets and festivities, in which no man could play a better part than Leicester. From Flushing he came to Middelburg, where, upon Christmas eve (according to the new reckoning), there was an entertainment, every dish of which has been duly chronicled. Pigs served on their feet, pheasants in their feathers, and baked swans with their necks thrust through gigantic pie-crust ; crystal castles of confectionary with silver streams flowing at their base, and fair virgins leaning from the battlements, looking for their new English champion, "wine in abundance, variety of all

¹ Bor, II. 685.

² Brooke's Sidney, 16, *seq.*

sorts, and wonderful welcomes"¹—such was the bill of fare. The next day the Lieutenant-General returned the compliment to the magistrates of Middelburg with a tremendous feast. Then came an interlude of unexpected famine; for as the Earl sailed with his suite in a fleet of two hundred vessels for Dort—a voyage of not many hours' usual duration—there descended a mighty frozen fog upon the waters, and they lay five whole days and nights in their ships, almost starved with hunger and cold—offering in vain a "pound of silver for a pound of bread."² Emerging at last from this dismal predicament, he landed at Dort, and so went to Rotterdam and Delft, everywhere making his way through lines of musketeers and civic functionaries, amid roaring cannon, pealing bells, burning cressets, blazing tar-barrels, fiery winged dragons, wreaths of flowers, and Latin orations.

The farther he went the braver seemed the country, and the better beloved his Lordship. Nothing was left undone, in the language of ancient chronicle, to fill the bellies and the heads of the whole company. At the close of the year he came to the Hague, where the festivities were unusually magnificent. A fleet of barges was sent to escort him. Peter, James, and John, met him upon the shore, while the Saviour appeared walking upon the waves, and ordered his disciples to cast their nets, and to present the fish to his Excellency. Farther on, he was confronted by Mars and Bellona, who recited Latin odes in his honour. Seven beautiful damsels upon a stage, representing the United States, offered him golden keys; seven others equally beautiful, embodying the seven sciences, presented him with garlands, while an enthusiastic barber adorned his shop with seven score of copper basins, with a wax-light in each, together with a rose, and a Latin posy in praise of Queen Elizabeth.⁴ Then there were tiltings in the water between champions mounted upon whales, and other monsters of the deep—representatives of siege, famine, pestilence, and murder—the whole interspersed with fireworks, poetry, charades, and

¹ Stowe's *Holinshed*, iv. 641.

² Sir John Conway to —, 27 Dec. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ *Ibid.* Stowe, *ubi sup.*

⁴ Stowe's *Holinshed*, iv. 641, *seq.*

harangues. Not Matthias, nor Anjou, nor King Philip, nor the Emperor Charles¹ in their triumphal progresses, had been received with more spontaneous or more magnificent demonstrations. Never had the living pictures been more startling, the allegories more incomprehensible, the banquets more elaborate, the orations more tedious. Beside himself with rapture, Leicester almost assumed the God. In Delft, a city which he described as "another London almost for beauty and fairness,"² he is said so far to have forgotten himself as to declare that his family had—in the person of Lady Jane Grey, his father, and brother—been unjustly deprived of the crown of England; an indiscretion which caused a shudder in all who heard him.³ It was also very dangerous for the Lieutenant-General to exceed the bounds of becoming modesty at that momentous epoch. His power, as we shall soon have occasion to observe, was anomalous, and he was surrounded by enemies. He was not only to grapple with a rapidly developing opposition in the States, but he was surrounded with masked enemies, whom he had brought with him from England. Every act and word of his were liable to closest scrutiny, and likely to be turned against him. For it was most characteristic of that intriguing age, that even the astute Walsingham, who had an eye and an ear at every key-hole in Europe, was himself under closest domestic inspection. There was one Poley, a trusted servant of Lady Sidney, then living in the house of her father Walsingham, during Sir Philip's absence, who was in close communication with Lord Montjoy's brother, Blount, then high in favour of Queen Elizabeth—"whose grandmother she might be for his age and hers"—and with another brother Christopher Blount, at that moment in confidential attendance upon Lord Leicester in Holland. Now Poley, and both the Blounts, were,

¹ "It is thought that when Charles V. made his entries here in these towns, there was not greater ceremonies; the people so joyful, and thronging so great, to see his Lordship, as it was wonder," &c. Edward Burnham to Sir F. Walsingham, Dec. 27, 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Leicester to Walsingham, 26 Dec. 1585, in Bruce, p. 31; and writing to Burghley the next day, he says, "the other towns I have passed by are very goodly towns, but this is the fairest of them all." (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Hoofd, Vervolgh, 134.

in reality, Papists, and in intimate correspondence with the agents of the Queen of Scots, both at home and abroad, although "forced to fawn upon Leicester, to see if they might thereby live quiet." They had a secret "alphabet," or cipher, among them, and protested warmly, that they "honoured the ground whereon Queen Mary trod better than Leicester with all his generation ; and that they felt bound to serve her who was the only saint living on the earth."¹

It may be well understood then that the Earl's position was a slippery one, and that great assumption might be unsafe. "He taketh the matter upon him," wrote Morgan to the Queen of Scots, "as though he were an absolute king ; but he hath many personages about him of good place out of England, the best number whereof desire nothing more than his confusion. Some of them be gone with him to avoid the persecution for religion in England. My poor advice and labour shall not be wanting to give Leicester all dishonour, which will fall upon him in the end with shame enough ; though for the present he be very strong."² Many of these personages of good place, and enjoying "charge and credit" with the Earl had very serious plans in their heads. Some of them meant "for the service of God, and the advantage of the King of Spain, to further the delivery of some notable towns in Holland and Zeeland to the said King and his ministers,"³ and we are like to hear of these individuals again.

Meantime, the Earl of Leicester was at the Hague. Why was he there ? What was his work ? Why had Elizabeth done such violence to her affection as to part with her favourite-in-chief ; and so far overcome her thrift, as to furnish forth, rather meagrely to be sure, that little army of Englishmen ? Why had the flower of England's chivalry set foot upon that dark and bloody ground where there seemed so much disaster to encounter, and so little glory to reap ? Why had England thrown herself so heroically into the breach, just as the last bulwarks were falling which protected Holland from the overwhelming onslaught of Spain ? It was because Holland was the threshold of England ; because the

¹ Morgan to Queen of Scots, in Murdin, ii. 495-501.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

two countries were one by danger and by destiny; because the naval expedition from Spain against England was already secretly preparing; because the deposed tyrant of Spain intended the Provinces, when again subjugated, as a stepping-stone to the conquest of England; because the naval and military forces of Holland—her numerous ships, her hardy mariners, her vast wealth, her commodious sea-ports, close to the English coast—if made Spanish property would render Philip invincible by sea and land; and because the downfall of Holland and of Protestantism would be death to Elizabeth, and annihilation to England.

There was little doubt on the subject in the minds of those engaged in this expedition. All felt most keenly the importance of the game, in which the Queen was staking her crown, and England its national existence.

“I pray God,” said Wilford, an officer much in Walsingham’s confidence, “that I live not to see this enterprise quail, and with it the utter subversion of religion throughout all Christendom. It may be I may be judged to be afraid of my own shadow. God grant it be so. But if her Majesty had not taken the helm in hand, and my Lord of Leicester sent over, this country had been gone ere this. . . . This war doth defend England. Who is he that will refuse to spend his life and living in it? If her Majesty consume twenty thousand men in the cause, the experimented men that will remain will double that strength to the realm.”¹

This same Wilford commanded a company in Ostend, and was employed by Leicester in examining the defences of that important place. He often sent information to the Secretary, “troubling him with the rude stile of a poor soldier, being driven to scribble in haste.” He reiterated, in more than one letter, the opinion, that twenty thousand men consumed in the war would be a saving in the end, and his own determination—although he had intended retiring from the military profession—to spend not only his life in the cause, but also the poor living that God had given him. “Her High-

¹ Thomas Wilford to Walsingham, ¹⁵/₂₅ Dec. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

ness hath now entered into it," he said ; " the fire is kindled ; whosoever suffers it to go out, it will grow dangerous to that side. The whole state of religion is in question, and the realm of England also, if this action quail. *God grant we never live to see that doleful day.* Her Majesty hath such footing now in these parts, as I judge it impossible for the King to weary her out, if every man will put to the work his helping hand, whereby it may be lustily followed, and the war not suffered to cool. *The freehold of England will be worth but little, if this action quail,* and therefore I wish no subject to spare his purse towards it."¹

Spain moved slowly. Philip the Prudent was not sudden or rash, but his whole life had proved, and was to prove, him inflexible in his purposes, and patient in his attempts to carry them into effect, even when the purposes had become chimerical, and the execution impossible. Before the fall of Antwerp he had matured his scheme for the invasion of England, in most of its details—a necessary part of which was of course the reduction of Holland and Zeeland. " Surely no danger nor fear of any attempt can grow to England," wrote Wilford, " so long as we can hold this country good." But never was honest soldier more mistaken than he, when he added :—" The Papists will make her Highness afraid of a great fleet now preparing in Spain. We hear it also, but it is only a scare-crow to cool the enterprise here."²

It was no scare-crow. On the very day on which Wilford was thus writing to Walsingham, Philip the Second was writing to Alexander Farnese. " The English," he said, " with their troops having gained a footing in the islands (Holland and Zeeland) give me much anxiety. The English Catholics are imploring me with much importunity to relieve them from the persecution they are suffering. When you sent me a plan, with the coasts, soundings, quicksands, and ports of England, you said that the enterprise of invading that country should be deferred till we had reduced the isles ; that, having them, we could much more conveniently attack

¹ Thomas Wilford to Walsingham, ¹⁸/₂₅ Dec. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Wilford to Burghley, ¹⁸/₂₈ Dec. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

England; or that at least we should wait till we had got Antwerp. As the city is now taken, I want your advice *now* about the invasion of England. To cut the root of the evils constantly growing up there, both for God's service and mine, is desirable. So many evils will thus be remedied, which would not be by only warring with the islands. It would be an uncertain and expensive war to go to sea for the purpose of chastising the insolent English corsairs, however much they deserve chastisement. I charge you to be secret, to give the matter your deepest attention, and to let me have your opinions at once." Philip then added a postscript, in his own hand, concerning the importance of acquiring a sea-port in Holland, as a basis of operations against England. "Without a port," he said, "we can do nothing whatever."¹

A few weeks later, the Grand Commander of Castile, by Philip's orders, and upon subsequent information received from the Prince of Parma, drew up an elaborate scheme for the invasion of England, and for the government of that country afterwards; a program according to which the King was to shape his course for a long time to come. The plot was an excellent plot. Nothing could be more artistic, more satisfactory to the prudent monarch; but time was to show whether there might not be some difficulty in the way of its satisfactory development.

"The enterprise," said the Commander, "ought certainly to be undertaken as serving the cause of the Lord. From the Pope we must endeavour to extract a promise of the largest aid we can get for the time when the enterprise can be undertaken. We must not declare that time however, in order to keep the thing a secret, and because perhaps thus more will be promised, under the impression that it will never take effect."² He added that the work could not well

¹ "Porque sin puerto no se puede hacer nada." Philip II. to Parma, 29 Dec. 1585. (Archivo de Simancas MS.)

² Parecer del Comendador Mayor dado a S. M. sobre la empresa de Inglaterra, anno 1586. (Archivo de Simancas MS.)

"Y al papa se procure sacar promesa de la mas gruesa ayuda que se pudiese para cuando se puede hacer la empresa, sin declararle el tiempo, por respeto del secreto, y porque quiza asi prometera mas, pensando que no ha de haber efecto."

be attempted before August or September of the following year; the only fear of such delay being that the French could hardly be kept during all that time in a state of revolt."¹ For this was a uniform portion of the great scheme. France was to be kept, at Philip's expense, in a state of perpetual civil war; its every city and village to be the scene of unceasing conflict and bloodshed—subjects in arms against king, and family against family;—and the Netherlands were to be ravaged with fire and sword; all this in order that the path might be prepared for Spanish soldiers into the homes of England. So much of misery to the whole human race was it in the power of one painstaking elderly valetudinarian to inflict, by never for an instant neglecting the business of his life.

Troops and vessels for the English invasion ought, in the Commander's opinion, to be collected in Flanders, under colour of an enterprise against Holland and Zeeland, while the armada to be assembled in Spain, of galleons, galeazas, and galleys, should be ostensibly for an expedition to the Indies.

Then, after the conquest, came arrangements for the government of England. Should Philip administer his new kingdom by a viceroy, or should he appoint a king out of his own family? On the whole the chances for the Prince of Parma seemed the best of any. "We must liberate the Queen of Scotland," said the Grand Commander, "and marry her to some one or another, both in order to put her out of love with her son, and to conciliate her devoted adherents. Of course the husband should be one of your Majesty's nephews, and none could be so appropriate as the Prince of Parma, that great captain, whom his talents, and the part he has to bear in the business, especially indicate for that honour."²

Then there was a difficulty about the possible issue of such a marriage. The Farneses claimed Portugal; so that children sprung from the blood-royal of England blended

¹ "No se pueden tener tanto tiempo rebueltos." (Ibid.)

² Ibid.

with that of Parma, might choose to make those pretensions valid. But the objection was promptly solved by the Commander:—"The Queen of Scotland is sure to have no children," he said.¹

That matter being adjusted, Parma's probable attitude as King of England was examined. It was true his ambition might cause occasional uneasiness, but then he might make himself still more unpleasant in the Netherlands. "If your Majesty suspects him," said the Commander, "which, after all, is unfair, seeing the way in which he has been conducting himself—it is to be remembered that in Flanders are similar circumstances and opportunities, and that he is well armed, much beloved in the country, and that the natives are of various humours. The English plan will furnish an honourable departure for him out of the Provinces; and the principle of loyal obligation will have much influence over so chivalrous a knight as he, when he is once placed on the English throne. Moreover, as he will be new there, he will have need of your Majesty's favour to maintain himself, and there will accordingly be good correspondence with Holland and the Islands. Thus your Majesty can put the Infanta and her husband into full possession of all the Netherlands; having provided them with so excellent a neighbour in England, and one so closely bound and allied to them. Then, as he is to have no English children" (we have seen that the Commander had settled that point) "he will be a very good mediator to arrange adoptions,² especially if you make good provision for his son Rainuccio in Italy. The reasons in favour of this plan being so much stronger than those against it, it would be well that your Majesty should write clearly to the Prince of Parma, directing him to conduct the

¹ — "desbace esta sombra, que como no ha de tener hijos la Reyna de Escocia." (Ibid.)

² "Y esta es honrada salida y que a el le obligaria mucho en ley de tan gran caballero; de mas, como nuevo, para mantenerse en Inglaterra habia menester el favor de V. M. Y en entronizandose el alli, no faltaria con-

cierto en Hollanda y las Islas, y podria V. M. meter en llena possession de todos los estados bajos a la Senora Infanta y su marido, dandoles tan buen vicino y tan obligado; y el no habiendo de tener hijos en Inglaterra, podria ser buen medianero para adopciones," &c. Parecer del Comendador Mayor, &c. (MS. before cited.)

enterprise" (the English invasion), "and to give him the first offer for this marriage (with Queen Mary) if he likes the scheme. If not, he had better mention which of the Archdukes should be substituted in his place."¹

There happened to be no lack of archdukes at that period for anything comfortable that might offer—such as a throne in England, Holland, or France—and the Austrian House was not remarkable for refusing convenient marriages; but the immediate future only could show whether Alexander I. of the House of Farnese was to reign in England, or whether the next king of that country was to be called Matthias, Maximilian, or Ernest of Hapsburg.

Meantime the Grand Commander was of opinion that the invasion-project was to be pushed forward as rapidly and as secretly as possible; because, before any one of Philip's nephews could place himself upon the English throne, it was first necessary to remove Elizabeth from that position. Before disposing of the kingdom, the preliminary step of conquering it was necessary. Afterwards it would be desirable, without wasting more time than was requisite, to return with a large portion of the invading force out of England, in order to complete the conquest of Holland. For after all, England was to be subjugated only as a portion of one general scheme; the main features of which were the reannexation of Holland and "the islands," and the acquisition of unlimited control upon the seas.

Thus the invasion of England was no "scarecrow," as Wilford imagined, but a scheme already thoroughly matured. If Holland and Zeeland should meantime fall into the hands of Philip, it was no exaggeration on that soldier's part to observe that the "freehold of England would be worth but little."²

¹ Parecer del Comendador Mayor, &c. (MS. before cited.)

² Upon that point there was no difference of opinion. The statesmen and soldiers of England were unanimous. "If I should not," said Burghley, "with all the powers of my heart, continually both wish and work ad-

vancement unto this action, I were an accursed person in the sight of God; considering the ends thereof tend to the glory of God, to the safety of the Queen's person, to the preservation of this realm in a perpetual quietness, wherein, for my particular interest, both for myself and my posterity, I

To oppose this formidable array against the liberties of Europe stood Elizabeth Tudor and the Dutch Republic. For the Queen, however arbitrary her nature, fitly embodied much of the nobler elements in the expanding English national character. She felt instinctively that her reliance in the impending death-grapple was upon the popular principle, the national sentiment, both in her own country and in Holland. That principle and that sentiment were symbolized in the Netherland revolt ; and England, although under a somewhat despotic rule, was already fully pervaded with the instinct of self-government. The people held the purse and the sword. No tyranny could be permanently established so long as the sovereign was obliged to come every year before Parliament to ask for subsidies ; so long as all the citizens and yeomen of England had weapons in their possession, and were carefully trained to use them ; so long, in short, as the militia was the only army, and private adventurers or trading companies created and controlled the only navy. War, colonization, conquest, traffic, formed a joint business and a private speculation. If there were danger that England, yielding to purely mercantile habits of thought and action, might degenerate from the more martial standard to which she had been accustomed, there might be virtue in that Netherland enter-

have as much interest as any of my degree." (Bruce, 'Leyc. Corresp.' p. 24.)

Walsingham had been straightforward from the first in his advocacy of the Netherland cause, which he knew to be identical with that of England, and, as we have seen, had been often indignant at the shufflings practised by the Queen's government in the matter. He was sincerely glad that Leicester had gone to the Provinces before it was quite too late. "All honest and well-affected subjects," said he to the Earl, "have cause to thank God that you arrived there so seasonably as you did ; for howsoever we mislike of the enterprise here, *all England should have smarted* if the same had not been taken in hand." (Ibid., p. 36.)

As for Leicester himself, he was

always vehement upon the subject. After his arrival in the country he was more intensely alive than ever to the dangers impending over England, in case the rebel Provinces should be re-annexed to Spain. "He is senseless," said he, "that conceiveth not that if the King of Spain had these countries at his commandment—let her Majesty have the best peace that ever was, or can be made—and we shall find, as the world now standeth, that he will force the Queen of England and England to be at his disposition. What with Spain for the west, and what with these countries for the east, England shall traffic no farther any of these ways than he shall give leave, without every voyage shall ask the charge of a whole navy to pass withal." (Ibid., p. 82.)

prise, which was now to call forth all her energies. The Provinces would be a seminary for English soldiers.

"There can be no doubt of our driving the enemy out of the country through famine and excessive charges," said the plain-spoken English soldier already quoted, who came out with Leicester, "if every one of us will put our minds to go forward *without making a miserable gain by the wars*. A man may see, by this little progress-journey, what this long peace hath wrought in us. We are weary of the war before we come where it groweth, such a danger hath this long peace brought us into. This is, and will be, in my opinion, a most fit school and nursery to nourish soldiers to be able to keep and defend our country hereafter, if men will follow it."¹

Wilford was vehement in denouncing the mercantile tendencies of his countrymen, and returned frequently to that point in his communications with Walsingham and other statesmen. "*God hath stirred up this action*," he repeated again, "to be a school to breed up soldiers to defend the freedom of England, which through these long times of peace and quietness is brought into a most dangerous estate, if it should be attempted. Our delicacy is such that we are already weary, yet this journey is naught in respect to the misery and hardship that soldiers must and do endure."²

He was right in his estimate of the effect likely to be produced by the war upon the military habits of Englishmen; for there can be no doubt that the organization and discipline of English troops was in anything but a satisfactory state at that period. There was certainly vast room for improvement. Nevertheless he was wrong in his views of the leading tendencies of his age. Holland and England, self-helping, self-moving, were already inaugurating a new era in the history of the world. The spirit of commercial maritime enterprise—then expanding rapidly into large proportions—was to be matched against the religious and knightly enthusiasm which had accomplished such wonders in an age that

¹ Thomas Wilford to Walsingham, ¹⁵/₂₅ Dec. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Wilford to Burghley, ¹⁸/₂₈ Dec. 1585, (S. P. Office MS.)

was passing away. Spain still personified, and had ever personified, chivalry, loyalty, piety ; but its chivalry, loyalty, and piety, were now in a corrupted condition. The form was hollow, and the sacred spark had fled. In Holland and England intelligent enterprise had not yet degenerated into mere greed for material prosperity. The love of danger, the thirst for adventure, the thrilling sense of personal responsibility and human dignity—not the base love for land and lucre—were the governing sentiments which led those bold Dutch and English rovers to circumnavigate the world in cockle-shells, and to beard the most potent monarch on the earth, both at home and abroad, with a handful of volunteers.

This then was the contest, and this the machinery by which it was to be maintained. A struggle for national independence, liberty of conscience, freedom of the seas, against sacerdotal and world-absorbing tyranny ; a mortal combat of the splendid infantry of Spain and Italy, the professional reiters of Germany, the floating castles of a world-empire, with the militiamen and mercantile-marine of England and Holland united. Holland had been engaged twenty years long in the conflict. England had thus far escaped it ; but there was no doubt, and could be none, that her time had come. She must fight the battle of Protestantism on sea and shore, shoulder to shoulder, with the Netherlands, or await the conqueror's foot on her own soil.

What now was the disposition and what the means of the Provinces to do their part in the contest ? If the twain, as Holland wished, had become of one flesh, would England have been the loser ? Was it quite sure that Elizabeth—had she even accepted the less compromising title which she refused—would not have been quite as much the protected as the “protectress ?”

It is very certain that the English, on their arrival in the Provinces, were singularly impressed by the opulent and stately appearance of the country and its inhabitants. Notwithstanding the tremendous war which the Hollanders had been waging against Spain for twenty years, their commerce

had continued to thrive, and their resources to increase. Leicester was in a state of constant rapture at the magnificence which surrounded him, from his first entrance into the country. Notwithstanding the admiration expressed by the Hollanders for the individual sumptuousness of the Lieutenant-General; his followers, on their part, were startled by the general luxury of their new allies. "The realm is rich and full of men," said Wilford, "the sums men exceed in apparel would bear the brunt of this war;"¹ and again, "if the excess used in sumptuous apparel were only abated, and that we could convert the same to these wars, it would stop a great gap."²

The favourable view taken by the English as to the resources and inclination of the Netherland commonwealth was universal. "The general wish and desire of these countrymen," wrote Sir Thomas Shirley, "is that the amity begun between England and this nation may be everlasting, and there is not any of our company of judgment but wish the same. For all they that see the goodliness and stateliness of these towns, strengthened both with fortification and natural situation, all able to defend themselves with their own abilities, must needs think it too fair a prey to be let pass, and a thing most worthy to be embraced."³

Leicester, whose enthusiasm continued to increase as rapidly as the Queen's zeal seemed to be cooling, was most anxious lest the short-comings of his own Government should work irreparable evil. "I pray you, my lord," he wrote to Burghley, "forget not us poor exiles; if you do, God must and will forget you. And great pity it were that so noble provinces and goodly havens, with such infinite ships and mariners, should not be always as they may now easily be, at the assured devotion of England. In my opinion he can neither love Queen nor country that would not wish and further it should be so. And seeing her Majesty is thus far entered into

¹ Wilford to Walsingham. (MS. before cited.)

² Wilford to Burghley. (MS. before cited.)

³ Sir Thomas Shirley to Earl of Leicester, 26 Dec. 1595. (S. P. Office MS.)
5 Jan. 1596.

the cause, and that these people comfort themselves in full hope of her favour, it were a sin and a shame it should not be handled accordingly, both for honour and surety.”¹

Sir John Conway, who accompanied the Earl through the whole of his “progress-journey,” was quite as much struck as he by the flourishing aspect and English proclivities of the Provinces. “The countries which we have passed,” he said, “are fertile in their nature; the towns, cities, buildings, of more state and beauty, to such as have travelled other countries, than any they have ever seen. The people the most industrious by all means to live that be in the world, and, no doubt, passing rich. They outwardly show themselves of good heart, zeal, and loyalty, towards the Queen our mistress. There is no doubt that the general number of them had rather come under her Majesty’s regiment, than to continue under the States and burgomasters of their country. The impositions which they lay in defence of their State is wonderful. If her Highness proceed in this beginning, she may retain these parts hers, with their good love, and her great glory and gain. I would she might as perfectly see the whole country, towns, profits, and pleasures thereof, in a glass, as she may her own face; I do then assure myself she would with careful consideration receive them, and not allow of any man’s reason to the contrary. . . . The country is worthy any prince in the world, the people do reverence the Queen, and in love of her do so believe that the Grace of Leicester is by God and her sent among them for her good. And they believe in him for the redemption of their bodies, as they do in God for their souls. I dare pawn my soul, that if her Majesty will allow him the just and rightful mean to manage this cause, that he will so handle the manner and matter as shall highly both please and profit her Majesty, and increase her country, and his own honour.”²

Lord North, who held a high command in the auxiliary force, spoke also with great enthusiasm. “Had your Lord-

¹ Leicester to Burghley, 27 Dec. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Sir John Conway to ———, 27 Dec., 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

ship seen," he wrote to Burghley, "with what thankful hearts these countries receive all her Majesty's subjects, what multitudes of people they be, what stately cities and buildings they have, how notably fortified by art, how strong by nature, how fertile the whole country, and how wealthy it is, you would, I know, praise the Lord that opened your lips to undertake this enterprise, the continuance and good success whereof will eternise her Majesty, beautify her crown, with the most shipping, with the most populous and wealthy countries, that ever prince added to his kingdom, or that is or can be found in Europe. I lack wit, good my Lord, to dilate this matter."¹

Leicester, better informed than some of those in his employment, entertained strong suspicions concerning Philip's intentions with regard to England; but he felt sure that the only way to laugh at a Spanish invasion was to make Holland and England as nearly one as it was possible to do.

"No doubt that the King of Spain's preparations by sea be great," he said; "but I know that all that he and his friends can make are not able to match with her Majesty's forces, if it please her to use the means that God hath given her. But besides her own, if she need, I will undertake to furnish her from hence, upon two months' warning, a navy for strong and tall ships, with their furniture and mariners, that the King of Spain, and all that he can make, shall not be able to encounter with them. I think the bruit of his preparations is made the greater to terrify her Majesty and this country people. But, thanked be God, her Majesty hath little cause to fear him. *And in this country they esteem no more of his power by sea than I do of six fisher-boats off Rye.*"²

Thus suggestive is it to peep occasionally behind the curtain. In the calm cabinet of the Escorial, Philip and his *comendador mayor* are laying their heads together, preparing the invasion of England; making arrangements for King Alexander's coronation in that island, and—like sensible, far-

¹ Lord North to Lord Burghley, 27 Dec. 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Leicester to Burghley, 29 Jan. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

sighted persons as they are—even settling the succession to the throne after Alexander's death, instead of carelessly leaving such distant details to chance, or subsequent consideration. On the other hand, plain Dutch sea-captains, grim beggars of the sea, and the like, denizens of a free commonwealth and of the boundless ocean—men who are at home on blue water, and who have burned gunpowder against those prodigious slave-rowed galleys of Spain—together with their new allies, the dauntless mariners of England—who at this very moment are “singeing the King of Spain's beard,” as it had never been singed before—are not so much awe-struck with the famous preparations for invasion as was perhaps to be expected. There may be a delay, after all, before Parma can be got safely established in London, and Elizabeth in Orcus, and before the blood-tribunal of the Inquisition can substitute its sway for that of the “most noble, wise, and learned United States.” Certainly, Philip the Prudent would have been startled, difficult as he was to astonish, could he have known that those rebel Hollanders of his made no more account of his slowly-preparing invincible armada than of six fisher-boats off Rye. Time alone could show where confidence had been best placed. Meantime it was certain, that it well behoved Holland and England to hold hard together, nor let “that enterprise quail.”

The famous expedition of Sir Francis Drake was the commencement of a revelation. “That is the string,” said Leicester, “that touches the King indeed.”¹ It was soon to be made known to the world that the ocean was not a Spanish Lake, nor both the Indies the private property of Philip. “While the riches of the Indies continue,” said Leicester, “he thinketh he will be able to weary out all other princes; and I know, by good means, that he more feareth this action of Sir Francis than he ever did anything that has been attempted against him.”² With these continued assaults upon the golden treasure-houses of Spain, and by a determined effort to maintain the still more important stronghold

¹ Leicester to Burghley, 29 Jan. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² *Ibid.*

which had been wrested from her in the Netherlands, England might still be safe. "This country is so full of ships and mariners," said Leicester, "so abundant in wealth, and in the means to make money, that, had it but stood neutral, what an aid had her Majesty been deprived of. But if it had been the enemy's also, I leave it to your consideration what had been likely to ensue. These people do now honour and love her Majesty in marvellous sort."¹

There was but one feeling on this most important subject among the English who went to the Netherlands. All held the same language. The question was plainly presented to England whether she would secure to herself the great bulwark of her defence, or place it in the hands of her mortal foe? How could there be doubt or supineness on such a momentous subject? "Surely, my Lord," wrote Richard Cavendish to Burghley, "if you saw the wealth, the strength, the shipping, and abundance of mariners, whereof these countries stand furnished, your heart would quake to think that so hateful an enemy as Spain should again be furnished with such instruments; and the Spaniards themselves do nothing doubt upon the hope of the consequence hereof, to assure themselves of the certain ruin of her Majesty and the whole estate."²

And yet at the very outset of Leicester's administration, there was a whisper of peace-overtures to Spain, secretly made by Elizabeth in her own behalf, and in that of the Provinces. We shall have soon occasion to examine into the truth of these rumours, which, whether originating in truth or falsehood, were most pernicious in their effects. The Hollanders were determined never to return to slavery again, so long as they could fire a shot in their own defence. They earnestly wished English cooperation, but it was the cooperation of English matchlocks and English cutlasses, not English protocols and apostilles. It was military, not diplomatic machinery that they required. If they could

¹ Leicester to Burghley, (MS. before cited.)

² Richard Cavendish to Lord Burghley, 18 March, 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

make up their minds to submit to Philip and the Inquisition again, Philip and the Holy Office were but too ready to receive the erring penitents to their embrace without a go-between.

It was war, not peace, therefore, that Holland meant by the English alliance. It was war, not peace, that Philip intended. It was war, not peace, that Elizabeth's most trusty counsellors knew to be inevitable. There was also, as we have shown, no doubt whatever as to the good disposition, and the great power of the republic to bear its share in the common cause. The enthusiasm of the Hollanders was excessive. "There was such a noise, both in Delft, Rotterdam, and Dort," said Leicester, "in crying 'God save the Queen!' as if she had been in Cheapside."¹ Her own subjects could not be more loyal than were the citizens and yeomen of Holland. "The members of the States dare not but be Queen Elizabeth's," continued the Earl, "for by the living God! if there should fall but the least unkindness through their default, the people would kill them. All sorts of people, from highest to lowest, assure themselves, now that they have her Majesty's good countenance, to beat all the Spaniards out of their country. Never was there people in such jollity as these be. I could be content to lose a limb, could her Majesty see these countries and towns as I have done."² He was in truth excessively elated, and had already, in imagination, vanquished Alexander Farnese, and eclipsed the fame of William the Silent. "They will serve under me," he observed, "with a better will than ever they served under the Prince of Orange. Yet they loved him well, but they never hoped of the liberty of this country till now."³

Thus the English government had every reason to be satisfied with the aspect of its affairs in the Netherlands. But the nature of the Earl's authority was indefinite. The Queen had refused the sovereignty and the protectorate. She had also

Bruce, 'Leyc. Corresp.' p. 30, 31, 32, ^{26 Dec. 1585.}
5 Jan. 1586.

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid, p. 61, ²⁴ Jan. 1586.

distinctly and peremptorily forbidden Leicester to assume any office or title that might seem at variance with such a refusal on her part. Yet it is certain that, from the very first, he had contemplated some slight disobedience to these prohibitions. "What government is requisite"—wrote he in a secret memorandum of "things most necessary to understand"—"to be appointed to him that shall be their governor? First, that he have as much authority as the Prince of Orange, or any other governor or captain-general, hath had heretofore."¹ Now the Prince of Orange hath been stadholder of each of the United Provinces, governor-general, commander-in-chief, count of Holland in prospect, and sovereign, if he had so willed it. It would doubtless have been most desirable for the country, in its confused condition, had there been a person competent to wield, and willing to accept, the authority once exercised by William I. But it was also certain that this was exactly the authority which Elizabeth had forbidden Leicester to assume. Yet it is difficult to understand what position the Queen intended that her favourite should maintain, nor how he was to carry out her instructions, while submitting to her prohibitions. He was directed to cause the confused government of the Provinces to be redressed, and a better form of polity to be established. He was ordered, in particular, to procure a radical change in the constitution, by causing the deputies to the General Assembly to be empowered to decide upon important matters, without, as had always been the custom, making direct reference to the assemblies of the separate Provinces. He was instructed to bring about, in some indefinite way, a complete reform in financial matters, by compelling the States-General to raise money by liberal taxation, according to the "advice of her Majesty, delivered unto them by her lieutenant."²

And how was this radical change in the institutions of the Provinces to be made by an English earl, whose only authority

¹ Bruce, 'Leyc. Corresp.' p. 20, A.D. 1585.

² Leicester's Instructions, in Bruce, 12-15, December, 1585.

was that of commander-in-chief over five thousand half-starved, unpaid, utterly-forlorn English troops?

The Netherland envoys in England, in their parting advice, most distinctly urged him "to hale authority with the first, to declare himself chief head and governor-general" of the whole country,¹—for it was a political head that was wanted in order to restore unity of action—not an additional general, where there were already generals in plenty. Sir John Norris, valiant, courageous, experienced—even if not, as Walsingham observed, a "religious soldier," nor learned in anything "but a kind of licentious and corrupt government"²—was not likely to require the assistance of the new lieutenant-general in field operations, nor could the army be brought into a state of thorough discipline and efficiency by the magic of Leicester's name. The rank and file of the English army—not the commanders—needed strengthening. The soldiers required shoes and stockings, bread and meat, and for these articles there were not the necessary funds, nor would the title of Lieutenant-General supply the deficiency. The little auxiliary force was, in truth, in a condition most pitiable to behold: it was difficult to say whether the soldiers who had been already for a considerable period in the Netherlands, or those who had been recently levied in the purlieus of London, were in the most unpromising plight. The beggarly state in which Elizabeth had been willing that her troops should go forth to the wars was a sin and a disgrace. Well might her Lieutenant-General say that her "poor subjects were no better than abjects."³ There were few effective companies remaining of the old force. "There is but a small number of the first bands left," said Sir John Conway, "and those so pitiful and unable ever to serve again, as I leave to speak further of them, to avoid grief to your heart. A monstrous fault there hath been somewhere."⁴

¹ Advice of the Commissioners to Leicester, in Bruce, 15-19, A.D. 1585.

² Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.,' 222, $\frac{11}{21}$ April, 1586.

³ Ibid. 23, $\frac{5}{15}$ Dec., 1585.

⁴ Sir John Conway to ———, 27 Dec., 1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

Leicester took a manful and sagacious course at starting. Those who had no stomach for the fight were ordered to depart. The chaplain gave them sermons; the Lieutenant-General, on St. Stephen's day, made them a "pithy and honourable" oration, and those who had the wish or the means to buy themselves out of the adventure, were allowed to do so: for the Earl was much disgusted with the raw material out of which he was expected to manufacture serviceable troops. Swaggering ruffians from the disreputable haunts of London, cockney apprentices, broken-down tapsters, discarded serving men; the Bardolphs and Pistols, Mouldys, Warts, and the like—more at home in tavern-brawls or in dark lanes than on the battle-field—were not the men to be entrusted with the honour of England at a momentous crisis. He spoke with grief and shame of the worthless character and condition of the English youths sent over to the Netherlands. "Believe me," said he, "you will all repent the cockney kind of bringing up at this day of young men. They be gone hence with shame enough, and too many, that I will warrant, will make as many frays with bludgeons and bucklers as any in London shall do; but such shall never have credit with me again. Our simplest men in show have been our best men, and your *gallant blood and ruffian men the worst of all others.*"¹

Much winnowed, as it was, the small force might in time become more effective; and the Earl spent freely of his own substance to supply the wants of his followers, and to atone for the avarice of his sovereign. The picture painted however by muster-master Digges of the plumed troops that had thus come forth to maintain the honour of England and the cause of liberty, was anything but imposing. None knew better than Digges their squalid and slovenly condition, or was more anxious to effect a reformation therein. "A very wise, stout fellow he is," said the Earl, "and very careful to serve thoroughly her Majesty."² Leicester relied much upon his

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.', 228, ¹⁶/₂₆ April, 1586.

² Ibid. 135, ²⁴ Feb., 1585-6.
6 March

efforts. "There is good hope," said the muster-master, "that his excellency will shortly establish such good order for the government and training of our nation, that these weak, bad-furnished, ill-armed, and worse-trained bands, thus rawly left unto him, shall within a few months prove as well armed, trained, complete, gallant companies as shall be found elsewhere in Europe."¹ The damage they were likely to inflict upon the enemy seemed very problematical, until they should have been improved by some wholesome ball-practice. "They are so unskilful," said Digges, "that if they should be carried to the field no better trained than yet they are, they would prove much more dangerous to their own leaders and companies than any ways serviceable on their enemies. The hard and miserable estate of the soldiers generally, excepting officers, hath been such, as by the confessions of the captains themselves, they have been offered by many of their soldiers thirty and forty pounds a piece to be dismissed and sent away; whereby I doubt not the flower of the pressed English bands are gone, and the remnant supplied with such paddy persons as commonly, in voluntary procurements, men are glad to accept."²

Even after the expiration of four months the condition of the paddy persons continued most destitute. The English soldiers became mere barefoot starving beggars in the streets, as had never been the case in the worst of times, when the States were their paymasters.³ The little money brought from the treasury by the Earl, and the large sums which he had contributed out of his own pocket, had been spent in settling, and not fully settling, old scores. "Let me entreat

¹ Digges to Walsingham, $\frac{2}{12}$ Jan., 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Digges to Walsingham, MS. before cited.

³ "My good Lord," wrote Cavendish to Burghley, "what English heart can without shame or grief hear the Flushingers reproachfully say, that even in their hardest estate the soldiers of that town were always paid at every 15

days' end, whereas the same being now in H. Majesty's hands, her people there can get no pay in three months, so that they be almost driven either to starve or beg in the streets. These be heavy spectacles in the eyes of such as look for relief at H. Majesty's hands. My good Lord, the storm of my careful and grieved mind doth carry me I know not whither," &c. 18 March, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

you," wrote Leicester to Walsingham, "to be a mean to her Majesty, that the poor soldiers be not beaten for my sake. *There came no penny of treasure over since my coming hither.* That which then came was most part due before it came. There is much still due. They cannot get a penny, their credit is spent, *they perish for want of victuals and clothing in great numbers.* The whole are ready to mutiny. They cannot be gotten out to service, because they cannot discharge the debts they owe in the places where they are. I have let of my own more than I may spare."¹ "There was no soldier yet able to buy *himself a pair of hose,*" said the Earl again, "and it is too, too great shame to see how they go, and *it kills their hearts to show themselves among men.*"²

There was no one to dispute the Earl's claims. The Nassau family was desperately poor, and its chief, young Maurice, although he had been elected stadholder of Holland and Zeeland, had every disposition—as Sir Philip upon his arrival in Flushing immediately informed his uncle—to submit to the authority of the new governor. Louisa de Coligny, widow of William the Silent, was most anxious for the English alliance, through which alone she believed that the fallen fortunes of the family could be raised. It was thus only, she thought, that the vengeance for which she thirsted upon the murderers of her father and her husband could be obtained. "We see now," she wrote to Walsingham, in a fiercer strain than would seem to comport with so gentle a nature—deeply wronged as the daughter of Coligny and the wife of Orange had been by Papists—"we see now the effects of our God's promises. He knows when it pleases Him to avenge the blood of His own, and I confess that I feel most keenly the joy which is shared in by the whole Church of God. There is none that has received more wrong from these murderers than I have done, and I esteem myself happy in the midst of my miseries that God has permitted me to see some vengeance. These begin-

¹ Leicester to Burghley and Walsingham, March 15, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Bruce, 167, $\frac{9}{13}$ March, 1586.

nings make me hope that I shall see yet more, which will be not less useful to the good, both in your country and in these isles."¹

There was no disguise as to the impoverished condition to which the Nassau family had been reduced by the self-devotion of its chief. They were obliged to ask alms of England, until the "sapling should become a tree." "Since it is the will of God," wrote the Princess to Davison, "I am not ashamed to declare the necessity of our house, for it is in His cause that it has fallen. I pray you, Sir, therefore to do me and these children the favour to employ your thoughts in this regard."² If there had been any strong French proclivities on their part—as had been so warmly asserted—they were likely to disappear. Villiers, who had been a confidential friend of William the Silent, and a strong favourer of France, in vain endeavoured to keep alive the ancient sentiments towards that country, although he was thought to be really endeavouring to bring about a submission of the Nassaus to Spain. "This Villiers," said Leicester, "is a most vile traitorous knave, and doth abuse a young nobleman here extremely, the Count Maurice. For all his religion, he is a more earnest persuader secretly to have him yield to a reconciliation than Sainte Aldegonde was. He shall not tarry ten days neither in Holland nor Zeeland. He is greatly hated here of all sorts, and it shall go hard but I will win the young Count."³

As for Hohenlo, whatever his opinions might once have been regarding the comparative merits of Frenchmen and Englishmen, he was now warmly in favour of England, and expressed an intention of putting an end to the Villiers'

¹ "Nous voyons, Monsieur, les effets des promesses de notre Dieu qui scait quand il luy plait venger le sang des siens, y faut que je confesse que je ressens fort particulièrement ceste joye commune a toute l'eglise de Dieu; comme ny ayant personne qui eust receu plus d'offence de ces massacres, et m'estime heureuse parmi tous mes malheurs de ce que Dieu a permis que j'en aye veu la vengeance.

Ces commencemens me font esperer que j'en verrai encores d'autres, qui ne seront moins utiles aux gens de bien, et en particulier en votre royaume et en ces Iales." Princess of Orange to Sir F. Walsingham, $\frac{1}{11}$ Jan., 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Princess of Orange to Davison, 7 Jan., 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Bruce, 73, $\frac{21 \text{ Jan.}}{1 \text{ Feb.}}$ 1585-6.

influence by simply drowning Villiers. The announcement of this summary process towards the counsellor was not untinged with rudeness towards the pupil. "The young Count," said Leicester, "by Villiers' means, was not willing to have Flushing rendered, which the Count Hollock perceiving, told the Count Maurice, in a great rage, that if he took any course than that of the Queen of England, and swore by no beggars, he would drown his priest in the haven before his face, and turn himself and his mother-in-law out of their house there, and thereupon went with Mr. Davison to the delivery of it."¹ Certainly, if Hohenlo permitted himself such startling demonstrations towards the son and widow of William the Silent, it must have been after his habitual potations had been of the deepest. Nevertheless it was satisfactory for the new chieftain to know that the influence of so vehement a partisan was secured for England. The Count's zeal deserved gratitude upon Leicester's part, and Leicester was grateful. "This man must be cherished," said the Earl; "he is sound and faithful, and hath indeed all the chief holds in his hands, and at his commandment. Ye shall do well to procure him a letter of thanks, taking knowledge in general of his good-will to her Majesty. He is a right Almayn in manner and fashion, free of his purse and of his drink, yet do I wish him her Majesty's pensioner before any prince in Germany, for he loves her and is able to serve her, and doth desire to be known her servant. He hath been laboured by his nearest kinsfolk and friends in Germany to have left the States and to have the King of Spain's pension and very great reward; but he would not. I trust her Majesty will accept of his offer to be her servant during his life, being indeed a very noble soldier."² The Earl was indeed inclined to take so cheerful view of matters as to believe that he should even effect a reform in the noble soldier's most unpleasant characteristic. "Hollock is a wise gallant gentleman," he said, "and very well esteemed. He hath only one fault, which is drinking; but good hope that he will amend it. Some make me believe that I shall be

¹ Bruce, 74, 75, date just quoted.

² Ibid.

able to do much with him, and I mean to do my best, for I see no man that knows all these countries, and the people of all sorts, like him, and this fault overthrows all."¹

Accordingly, so long as Maurice continued under the tutelage of this uproarious cavalier—who, at a later day, was to become his brother-in-law—he was not likely to interfere with Leicester's authority. The character of the young Count was developing slowly. More than his father had ever done, he deserved the character of the taciturn. A quiet keen observer of men and things, not demonstrative nor talkative, nor much given to writing—a modest, calm, deeply-reflecting student of military and mathematical science—he was not at that moment deeply inspired by political ambition. He was perhaps more desirous of raising the fallen fortunes of his house than of securing the independence of his country. Even at that early age, however, his mind was not easy to read, and his character was somewhat of a puzzle to those who studied it. "I see him much discontented with the States," said Leicester; "he hath a sullen deep wit. The young gentleman is yet to be won only to her Majesty, I perceive, of his own inclination. The house is marvellous poor and little regarded by the States, and if they get anything it is like to be by her Majesty, which should be altogether, and she may easily do for him to win him sure. I will undertake it."² Yet the Earl was ever anxious about some of the influences which surrounded Maurice, for he thought him more easily guided than he wished him to be by any others but himself. "He stands upon making and marring," he said, "as he meets with good counsel."³ And at another time he observed, "The young gentleman hath a solemn sly wit; but, in troth, if any be to be doubted toward the King of Spain, it is he and his counsellors, for they have been altogether, so far, French, and so far in mislike with England as they cannot almost hide it."⁴

And there was still another member of the house of Nassau

¹ Bruce, 61, ¹⁴ Jan., 1586.

² Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.,' 61, 62,

¹⁴ Jan., 1585-6.

³ Ibid. 374, ^{29 July} ^{8 Aug.} 1586.

⁴ Ibid. 74, ^{21 Jan.} ^{1 Feb.} 1586.

who was already an honour to his illustrious race. Count William Lewis, hardly more than a boy in years, had already served many campaigns, and had been desperately wounded in the cause for which so much of the heroic blood of his race had been shed. Of the five Nassau brethren, his father Count John was the sole survivor, and as devoted as ever to the cause of Netherland liberty. The other four had already laid down their lives in its defence. And William Lewis, was worthy to be the nephew of William and Lewis, Henry and Adolphus, and the son of John. Not at all a beautiful or romantic hero in appearance, but an odd-looking little man, with a round bullet-head, close-clipped hair, a small, twinkling, sagacious eye, rugged, somewhat puffy features screwed whimsically awry, with several prominent warts dotting, without ornamenting, all that was visible of a face which was buried up to the ears in a furzy thicket of yellow-brown beard, the tough young stadholder of Friesland, in his iron corslet, and halting upon his maimed leg, had come forth with other notable personages to the Hague. He wished to do honour heartily and freely to Queen Elizabeth and her representative. And Leicester was favourably impressed with his new acquaintance. "Here is another little fellow," he said, "as little as may be, but one of the gravest and wisest young men that ever I spake withal; it is the Count Guiliam of Nassau. He governs Friesland; I would every Province had such another."¹

Thus, upon the great question which presented itself upon the very threshold—the nature and extent of the authority to be exercised by Leicester—the most influential Netherlanders were in favour of a large and liberal interpretation of his powers. The envoys in England, the Nassau family, Hohenlo, the prominent members of the States, such as the shrewd, plausible Menin, the "honest and painful" Falk,² and the chancellor of Gelderland—"that very great, wise, old man Leoninus,"³ as Leicester called him,—were all desirous

¹ Bruce, 61, $\frac{14}{24}$ Jan., 1586.

² Ibid. 33, $\frac{46 \text{ Dec. } 1586}{5 \text{ Feb. } 1586}$

³ Leicester to Burghley, 18th Feb., 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

that he should assume an absolute governor-generalship over the whole country. This was a grave and a delicate matter, and needed to be severely scanned, without delay. But besides the natives, there were two Englishmen—together with ambassador Davison—who were his official advisers. Bartholomew Clerk, LL.D., and Sir Henry Killigrew had been appointed by the Queen to be members of the council of the United States, according to the provisions of the August treaty. The learned Bartholomew hardly seemed equal to his responsible position among those long-headed Dutch politicians. Philip Sidney—the only blemish in whose character was an intolerable tendency to puns—observed that “Doctor Clerk was of those clerks that are not always the wisest, and so my lord too late was finding him.”¹ The Earl himself, who never undervalued the intellect of the Netherlanders whom he came to govern, anticipated but small assistance from the English civilian. “I find no great stuff in my little colleague,” he said, “nothing that I looked for. It is a pity you have no more of his profession, able men to serve. This man hath good will, and a pretty scholar’s wit; *but he is too little for these big fellows, as heavy as her Majesty thinks them to be. I would she had but one or two, such as the worst of half a score be here.*”² The other English state-counsellor seemed more promising. “I have one here,” said the Earl, “in whom I take no small comfort; that is little Hal Killigrew. I assure you, my lord, he is a notable servant, and more in him than ever I heretofore thought of him, though I always knew him to be an honest man and an able.”³

But of all the men that stood by Leicester’s side, the most faithful, devoted, sagacious, experienced, and sincere of his counsellors, English or Flemish, was envoy Davison. It is important to note exactly the opinion that had been formed of him by those most competent to judge, before events in

¹ Gray’s Sidney, p. 313. Thus: “Turner, I hope, will serve my turn well,” and again, “Mr. Paul Bus hath too many busses in his head,”

and so on. (Ibid. 313, 327.)

² Bruce’s ‘Leyc. Corresp.’ 33.

³ Leicester to Burghley, 18 Feb., 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

which he was called on to play a prominent and responsible though secondary part, had placed him in a somewhat false position.

"Mr. Davison," wrote Sidney, "is here very careful in her Majesty's causes, and in your Lordship's. He takes great pains and goes to great charges for it." The Earl himself was always vehement in his praise. "Mr. Davison," said he at another time, "has dealt most painfully and chargeably in her Majesty's service here, and you shall find him as sufficiently able to deliver the whole state of this country as any man that ever was in it, acquainted with all sorts here that are men of dealing. Surely, my Lord, you shall do a good deed that he may be remembered with her Majesty's gracious consideration, for his being here has been very chargeable, having kept a very good countenance, and a very good table, all his abode here, and of such credit with all the chief sort, as I know no stranger in any place hath the like. As I am a suitor to you to be his good friend to her Majesty, so I must heartily pray you, good my Lord, to procure his coming hither shortly to me again, for I know not almost how to do without him. I confess it is a wrong to the gentleman, and I protest before God, if it were for mine own particular respect, I would not require it for 5000*l*. But your Lordship doth little think how greatly I have to do, as also how needful for her Majesty's service his being here will be. Wherefore, good my Lord, if it may not offend her Majesty, be a mean for this my request, for her own service' sake wholly."

Such were the personages who surrounded the Earl on his arrival in the Netherlands, and such their sentiments respecting the position that it was desirable for him to assume. But there was one very important fact. He had studiously concealed from Davison that the Queen had peremptorily and distinctly forbidden his accepting the office of governor-

¹ Sidney to Leicester, 22 Nov. 1585.

Brit. Mus. Galba, C. viii. 213, MS.

Same to same, $\frac{1}{11}$ Feb. 1586. (S. P.

Office MS.)

² Leicester to Burghley, 27 Dec.

1585. (S. P. Office MS.)

general. It seemed reasonable, if he came thither at all, that he should come in that elevated capacity. The States wished it. The Earl ardently longed for it. The ambassador, who knew more of Netherland politics and Netherland humours than any man did, approved of it. The interests of both England and Holland seemed to require it. No one but Leicester knew that her Majesty had forbidden it.

Accordingly, no sooner had the bell-ringing, cannon-explosions, bonfires, and charades, come to an end, and the Earl got fairly housed in the Hague, than the States took the affair of government seriously in hand.

On the 9th January, Chancellor Leoninus and Paul Buys waited upon Davison, and requested a copy of the commission granted by the Queen to the Earl. The copy was refused, but the commission was read;¹ by which it appeared that he had received absolute command over her Majesty's forces in the Netherlands by land and sea, together with authority to send for all gentlemen and other personages out of England that he might think useful to him. On the 10th the States passed a resolution to offer him the governor-generalship over all the Provinces. On the same day another committee waited upon his "Excellency"—as the States chose to denominate the Earl, much to the subsequent wrath of the Queen—and made an appointment for the whole body to wait upon him the following morning.²

Upon that day accordingly—New Year's Day, by the English reckoning, 11th January by the New Style—the deputies of all the States at an early hour came to his lodgings, with much pomp, preceded by a herald¹ and trumpeters. Leicester, not expecting them quite so soon, was in his dressing-room, getting ready for the solemn audience, when, somewhat to his dismay, a flourish of trumpets announced the arrival of the whole body in his principal hall of audience. Hastening his preparations as much as possible,

¹ Resolutien van de Staten General, a° 1586. (Hague Archives, MS., Jan. 1586.)

² Ibid. Compare Bor, II. 686, seq.

he descended to that apartment, and was instantly saluted by a flourish of rhetoric still more formidable; for that "very great, and wise old Leoninus," forthwith began an oration, which promised to be of portentous length and serious meaning. The Earl was slightly flustered, when, fortunately, some one whispered in his ear that they had come to offer him the much-coveted prize of the stadholderate-general. Thereupon he made bold to interrupt the flow of the chancellor's eloquence in its first outpourings. "As this is a very private matter," said he, "it will be better to treat of it in a more private place. I pray you therefore to come into my chamber, where these things may be more conveniently discussed."¹

"You hear what my Lord says," cried Leoninus, turning to his companions; "we are to withdraw into his chamber."²

Accordingly they withdrew, accompanied by the Earl, and by five or six select counsellors, among whom were Davison and Dr. Clerk. Then the chancellor once more commenced his harangue, and went handsomely through the usual forms of compliment, first to the Queen, and then to her representative, concluding with an earnest request that the Earl—although her Majesty had declined the sovereignty—"would take the name and place of absolute governor and general of all their forces and soldiers, with the disposition of their whole revenues and taxes."³

So soon as the oration was concluded, Leicester, who did not speak French, directed Davison to reply in that language.

The envoy accordingly, in name of the Earl, expressed the deepest gratitude for this mark of the affection and confidence of the States-General towards the Queen. He assured them that the step thus taken by them would be the cause of still more favour and affection on the part of her Majesty, who would unquestionably, from day to day, augment the succour that she was extending to the Provinces in order to relieve men from their misery. For himself, the Earl protested that

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.', p. 58, $\frac{14}{24}$ Jan. 1586.

² Ibid.

³ Bruce, 58, $\frac{14}{24}$ Jan. 1586.

he could never sufficiently recompense the States for the honour which had thus been conferred upon him, even if he should live one hundred lives. Although he felt himself quite unable to sustain the weight of so great an office, yet he declared that they might repose with full confidence on his integrity and good intentions. Nevertheless, as the authority thus offered to him was very arduous, and as the subject required deep deliberation, he requested that the proposition should be reduced to writing, and delivered into his hands. He might then come to a conclusion thereupon, most conducive to the glory of God and the welfare of the land.¹

Three days afterwards, 14th January, the offer, drawn up formally in writing, was presented to envoy Davison, according to the request of Leicester. Three days latter, 17th ⁴/_{Jan. 1586.} January, his Excellency having deliberated upon the ¹⁴/_{Jan. 1586.} proposition, requested a committee of conference.² ¹⁷/_{Jan. 1586.} The conference took place the same day, and there was some discussion upon matters of detail, principally relating to the matter of contributions. The Earl, according to the report of the committee, manifested no repugnance to the acceptance of the office, provided these points could be satisfactorily adjusted. He seemed, on the contrary, impatient, rather than reluctant; for, on the day following the conference, he sent his secretary Gilpin with a somewhat importunate message. "His Excellency was surprised," said the secretary, "that the States were so long in coming to a resolution on the matters suggested by him in relation to the offer of the government-general; nor could his Excellency imagine the cause of the delay."³

¹ Resol. Stat. General, ¹/₁₁ Jan. 1586. (Hague Archives, MS.) According to the Earl's own account of his speech, through the mouth of Davison, he had much more distinctly expressed his reluctance to accept the authority offered, placing his refusal, not on the ground of unfitness, but on the unexpected nature of the proposition, and upon its "being further than had past

in the contract with her Majesty." The account in the text is from the MS. journal of the Sessions of the States General, kept from day to day by the clerk of that assembly.

² Resol. Stat. Gen. ⁴/₁₄ - ¹/₁₇ Jan. 1586.

³ Resol. Stat. Gen. ⁸/₁₈ Jan. 1586, (MSS.)

For, in truth, the delay was caused by an excessive, rather than a deficient, appetite for power on the part of his Excellency. The States, while conferring what they called the "absolute" government, by which it afterwards appeared that they meant absolute, in regard to time, not to function—were very properly desirous of retaining a wholesome control over that government by means of the state-council. They wished not only to establish such a council, as a check upon the authority of the new governor, but to share with him at least in the appointment of the members who were to compose the board. But the aristocratic Earl was already restive under the thought of any restraint—most of all the restraint of individuals belonging to what he considered the humbler classes.

"Cousin, my lord ambassador," said he to Davison, "among your sober companions be it always remembered, I beseech you, that your cousin have no other alliance but with gentle blood. By no means consent that he be linked in faster bonds than their absolute grant may yield him a free and honourable government, to be able to do such service as shall be meet for an honest man to perform in such a calling, which of itself is very noble. But yet it is not more to be embraced, if I were to be led in alliance by such keepers as will sooner draw my nose from the right scent of the chace, than to lead my feet in the true pace to pursue the game I desire to reach. Consider, I pray you, therefore, what is to be done, and how unfit it will be in respect of my poor self, and how unacceptable to her Majesty, and how advantageous to enemies that will seek holes in my coat, if I should take so great a name upon me, and so little power. They challenge acceptation already, and I challenge their absolute grant and offer to me, before they spoke of any instructions; for so it was when Leoninus first spoke to me with them all on New Years-Day, as you heard—offering in his speech all manner of absolute authority. If it please them to confirm this, without restraining instructions, I will willingly serve the States, or

else, with such advising instructions as the Dowager of Hungary had."¹

This was explicit enough, and Davison, who always acted for Leicester in the negotiations with the States, could certainly have no doubt as to the desires of the Earl, on the subject of "absolute" authority. He did accordingly what he could to bring the States to his Excellency's way of thinking; nor was he unsuccessful.

On the 22nd January, a committee of conference was sent by the States to Leyden, in which city Leicester was making a brief visit. They were instructed to procure his consent, if possible, to the appointment, by the States themselves, of a council consisting of members from each Province. If they could not obtain this concession, they were directed to insist as earnestly as possible upon their right to present a double list of candidates, from which he was to make nominations. And if the one and the other proposition should be refused, the States were then to agree that his Excellency should freely choose and appoint a council of state, consisting of native residents from every Province, for the period of one year. The committee was further authorised to arrange the commission for the governor, in accordance with these points; and to draw up a set of instructions for the state-council, to the satisfaction of his Excellency. The committee was also empowered to conclude the matter at once, without further reference to the States.²

Certainly a committee thus instructed was likely to be sufficiently pliant. It had need to be, in order to bend to the humour of his Excellency, which was already becoming imperious. The adulation which he had received, 'the

¹ Leicester to Davison, $\frac{11}{21}$ Jan. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.) Davison answered in the same strain, assuring the Earl that he had taken the Estates well to task for wishing to "prescribe instructions after their grant of an authority absolute," and informing him that they were "very sorry any thing

should fall out might justly distaste him." Davison to Leicester, $\frac{19}{22}$ Jan. 1586. Brit. Mus. Galba, C. viii. p. 4, MS. $\frac{14}{24}$ Jan. 1586. See Bruce, p. 59.

² Resol. Stat. Gen. $\frac{9}{10}$ - $\frac{19}{22}$ Jan. 1586, MS.

triumphal marches, the Latin orations, the flowers strewn in his path, had produced their effect, and the Earl was almost inclined to assume the airs of royalty. The committee waited upon him at Leyden. He affected a reluctance to accept the "absolute" government, but his coyness could not deceive such experienced statesmen as the "wise old Leoninus," or Menin, Maalzoon, Floris Thin, or Aitzma, who composed the deputation. It was obvious enough to them that it was not a King Log that had descended among them, but it was not a moment for complaining. The governor-elect insisted, of course, that the two Englishmen, according to the treaty with her Majesty, should be members of the council. He also, at once, nominated Leoninus, Meetkerk, Brederode, Falck, and Paul Buys, to the same office; thinking, no doubt, that these were five keepers—if keepers he must have—who would not draw his nose off the scent, nor prevent his reaching the game he hunted, whatever that game might be. It was reserved for the future, however, to show, whether the five were like to hunt in company with him as harmoniously as he hoped. As to the other counsellors, he expressed a willingness that candidates should be proposed for him, as to whose qualifications he would make up his mind at leisure.¹

This matter being satisfactorily adjusted—and certainly unless the game pursued by the Earl was a crown royal, he ought to have been satisfied with his success—the States received a letter from their committee at Leyden, informing them that his Excellency, after some previous protestations, had accepted the government (24th January, 1586).²

It was agreed that he should be inaugurated Governor-General of the United Provinces of Gelderland and Zutphen, Flanders, Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Friesland, and all others in confederacy with them. He was to have supreme military command by land and sea. He was to exercise supreme authority in matters civil and political, according to the

¹ Resol. Stat. Gen. $\frac{14}{24}$ Jan. 1586, MS.

² Ibid.

customs prevalent in the reign of the Emperor Charles V. All officers, political, civil, legal, were to be appointed by him out of a double or triple nomination made by the States of the Provinces in which vacancies might occur. The States-General were to assemble whenever and wherever he should summon them. They were also—as were the States of each separate Province—competent to meet together by their own appointment. The Governor-General was to receive an oath of fidelity from the States, and himself to swear the maintenance of the ancient laws, customs, and privileges of the country.¹

The deed was done. In vain had an emissary of the French court been exerting his utmost to prevent the consummation of this close alliance. For the wretched government of Henry III., while abasing itself before Philip II., and offering the fair cities and fertile plains of France as a sacrifice to that insatiable ambition which wore the mask of religious bigotry, was most anxious that Holland and England should not escape the meshes by which it was itself enveloped. The agent at the Hague came nominally upon some mercantile affairs, but in reality, according to Leicester, “to impeach the States from binding themselves to her Majesty.”² But he was informed that there was then no leisure for his affairs, “for the States would attend to the service of the Queen of England, before all princes in the world.” The agent did not feel complimented by the coolness of this reception; yet it was reasonable enough, certainly, that the Hollanders should remember with bitterness the contumely which they had experienced the previous year in France. The emissary was, however, much disgusted. “The fellow,” said Leicester, “took it in such snuff, that he came proudly to the States, and offered his letters, saying; “Now I trust you have done all your sacrifices to the Queen of England, and may yield me some leisure to read my master’s letters.” “But they so shook him up,” continued the Earl, “for naming her Majesty

¹ Groot Plakaatboek, iv. 81. Bor, II. 686. Wagenaar, viii. 115-117. .

² Bruce, 47, ^{31 Dec. 1585}
10 Jan. 1586

in scorn—as they took it—that they hurled him his letters, and bid him content himself ; ” and so on, much to the agent’s discomfiture, who retired in greater “snuff” than ever.¹

So much for the French influence. And now Leicester had done exactly what the most imperious woman in the world, whose favour was the breath of his life, had expressly forbidden him to do. The step having been taken, the prize so tempting to his ambition having been snatched, and the policy which had governed the united action of the States and himself seeming so sound, what ought he to have done in order to avert the tempest which he must have foreseen ? Surely a man who knew so much of woman’s nature and of Elizabeth’s nature as he did, ought to have attempted to conciliate her affections, after having so deeply wounded her pride. He knew his power. Besides the graces of his person and manner—which few women, once impressed by them, could ever forget—he possessed the most insidious and flattering eloquence, and, in absence, his pen was as wily as his tongue. For the Earl was imbued with the very genius of courtship. None was better skilled than he in the phrases of rapturous devotion, which were music to the ear both of the woman and the Queen ; and he knew his royal mistress too well not to be aware that the language of passionate idolatry, however extravagant, had rarely fallen unheeded upon her soul. It was strange therefore, that in this emergency, he should not at once throw himself upon her compassion without any mediator. Yet, on the contrary, he committed the monstrous error of entrusting his defence to envoy Davison, whom he determined to despatch at once with instructions to the Queen, and towards whom he committed the grave offence of concealing from him her previous prohibitions. But how could the Earl fail to perceive that it was the woman, not the Queen, whom he should have implored for pardon ; that it was Robert Dudley, not William Davison, who ought to have sued upon his knees. This whole matter of the Netherland

¹ Bruce’s ‘*Leyc. Corresp.*’ 47, $\frac{31 \text{ Dec. } 1585}{10 \text{ Jan. } 1586}$.

sovereignty and the Leicester stadholderate, forms a strange psychological study, which deserves and requires some minuteness of attention ; for it was by the characteristics of these eminent personages that the current history was deeply stamped.

Certainly, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, the first letter conveying intelligence so likely to pique the pride of Elizabeth, should have been a letter from Leicester. On the contrary, it proved to be a dull formal epistle from the States.

And here again the assistance of the indispensable Davison was considered necessary. On the 3rd February the ambassador—having announced his intention of going to 3 Feb.
England, by command of his Excellency, so soon as 1586.
the Earl should have been inaugurated, for the purpose of explaining all these important transactions to her Majesty—waited upon the States with the request that they should prepare as speedily as might be their letter to the Queen, with other necessary documents, to be entrusted to his care. He also suggested that the draft or minute of their proposed epistle should be submitted to him for advice—"because the humours of her Majesty were best known to him."¹

Now the humours of her Majesty were best known to Leicester of all men in the whole world, and it is inconceivable that he should have allowed so many days and weeks to pass without taking these humours properly into account. But the Earl's head was slightly turned by his sudden and unexpected success. The game that he had been pursuing had fallen into his grasp, almost at the very start, and it is not astonishing that he should have been somewhat absorbed in the enjoyment of his victory.

Three days later (6th February) the minute of a letter to Elizabeth, drawn up by Menin, was submitted to the ambassador ; eight days after that (14th February) Mr. Davison took leave of the States, and set forth for the Brill on his way to England ; and three or four days later yet, he was still in

¹ Resol. Stat. Gen. 3 Feb. 1586, MS.

that sea-port, waiting for a favourable wind.¹ Thus from the 11th January, N.S., upon which day the first offer of the absolute government had been made to Leicester, nearly forty days had elapsed, during which long period the disobedient Earl had not sent one line, private or official, to her Majesty on this most important subject. And when at last the Queen was to receive information of her favourite's delinquency, it was not to be in his well-known handwriting and accompanied by his penitent tears and written caresses, but to be laid before her with all the formality of parchment and sealing-wax, in the stilted diplomatic jargon of those "highly-mighty, very learned, wise, and very foreseeing gentlemen, my lords the States-General." Nothing could have been managed with less adroitness.

Meantime, not heeding the storm gathering beyond the narrow seas, the new governor was enjoying the full sunshine of power. On the 4th February the ceremony of his inauguration took place, with great pomp and ceremony at the Hague."²

The beautiful, placid, village-capital of Holland wore much the same aspect at that day as now. Clean, quiet, spacious streets, shaded with rows of whispering poplars and umbrageous limes, broad sleepy canals—those liquid highways along which glided in phantom silence the bustle, and traffic, and countless cares of a stirring population—quaint toppling houses, with tower and gable; ancient brick churches, with slender spire and musical chimes; thatched cottages on the outskirts, with stork-nests on the roofs—the whole without fortification save the watery defences which enclosed it with long-drawn lines on every side; such was the Count's park, or 's Graven Haage, in English called the Hague.

It was embowered and almost buried out of sight by vast groves of oaks and beeches. Ancient Badahuennan forests of sanguinary Druids, the "wild wood without mercy" of Saxon savages, where, at a later period, sovereign Dirks and

¹ Resol. Stat. Gen. 6-20 Feb. 1586, MS.

² Resol. Stat. Gen. 4 Feb. 1586, MS.

Florences, in long succession of centuries, had ridden abroad with lance in rest, or hawk on fist ; or under whose boughs, in still nearer days, the gentle Jacqueline had pondered and wept over her sorrows, stretched out in every direction between the city and the neighbouring sea. In the heart of the place stood the ancient palace of the counts, built in the thirteenth century by William II. of Holland, King of the Romans, with massive brick walls, cylindrical turrets, pointed gable and rose-shaped windows, and with spacious court-yard, enclosed by feudal moat, drawbridge, and portcullis.

In the great banqueting-hall of the ancient palace, whose cedarn-roof of magnificent timber-work, brought by crusading counts from the Holy Land, had rung with the echoes of many a gigantic revel in the days of chivalry—an apartment one hundred and fifty feet long and forty feet high—there had been arranged an elevated platform, with a splendid chair of state for the “absolute” governor, and with a great profusion of gilding and velvet tapestry, hangings, gilt emblems, complimentary devices, lions, unicorns, and other imposing appurtenances. Prince Maurice, and all the members of his house, the States-General in full costume, and all the great functionaries, civil and military, were assembled. There was an elaborate harangue by orator Menin, in which it was proved, by copious citations from Holy Writ and from ancient chronicle, that the Lord never forsakes His own ; so that now, when the Provinces were at their last gasp by the death of Orange and the loss of Antwerp, the Queen of England and the Earl of Leicester had suddenly descended, as if from Heaven, to their rescue. Then the oaths of mutual fidelity were exchanged between the governor and the States, and, in conclusion, Dr. Bartholomew Clerk ventured to measure himself with the “big fellows,” by pronouncing an oration which seemed to command universal approbation. And thus the Earl was duly installed Governor-General of the United States of the Netherlands.¹

¹ Resol. Stat. Gen. 4 Feb. 1586, MS. Bor. II. 688, 689. Wagenaar, viii. 116, *seq.* Holinshed, iv. 647, *seq.* Stowe, 715, *seq.*

But already the first mutterings of the storm were audible. A bird in the air had whispered to the Queen that her favourite was inclined to disobedience. "Some flying tale hath been told me here," wrote Leicester to Walsingham, "that her Majesty should mislike my name of Excellency. But if I had delighted, or would have received titles, I refused a title higher than Excellency, as Mr. Davison, if you ask him, will tell you; and that I, my own self, refused most earnestly that, and, if I might have done it, this also."¹ Certainly, if the Queen objected to this common form of address, which had always been bestowed upon Leicester, as he himself observed, ever since she had made him an earl,² it might be supposed that her wrath would mount high when she should hear of him as absolute governor-general. It is also difficult to say what higher title he had refused, for certainly the records show that he had refused nothing, in the way of power and dignity, that it was possible for him to obtain.

But very soon afterwards arrived authentic intelligence that the Queen had been informed of the proposition made on New Year's-Day (O. S.), and that, although she could not imagine the possibility of his accepting, she was indignant that he had not peremptorily rejected the offer.

"As to the proposal made to you," wrote Burghley, "by the mouth of Leoninus, her Majesty hath been informed that you had thanked them in her name, and alledged that there was no such thing in the contract, and that therefore you could not accept nor knew how to answer the same."³

Now this information was obviously far from correct, although it had been furnished by the Earl himself to Burghley. We have seen that Leicester had by no means rejected, but very gratefully entertained, the proposition as

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 94, $\frac{v}{14}$ Feb. 1586.

² Compare Camden, III. 399, "being derided by those that envied him, and the title of Excellency, which of all Englishmen, he was the first that ever

used, exploded and tripped off the stage."

³ Burghley (in his own hand) to Leicester, $\frac{26 \text{ Jan.}}{5 \text{ Feb.}}$ 1586. S. P. Office MS.

soon as made. Nevertheless the Queen was dissatisfied, even without suspecting that she had been directly disobeyed. "Her Majesty," continued the Lord-Treasurer, "is much offended with this proceeding. She allows not that you should give them thanks, but findeth it very strange that you did not plainly declare to them that they did well know how often her Majesty had refused to have any one for her take any such government there, and that she had always so answered peremptorily. Therefore there might be some suspicion conceived that by offering on their part, and refusal on hers, some further mischief might be secretly hidden by some odd person's device to the hurt of the cause. But in that your Lordship did not flatly say to them that yourself did know her Majesty's mind therein, that she never meant, in this sort, to take the absolute government, she is offended ; considering, as she saith, that none knew her determination therein better than yourself. For at your going hence, she did peremptorily charge you not to accept any such title and office ; and therefore her straight commandment now is that you shall not accept the same, for she will never assent thereto, nor avow you with any such title."¹

If Elizabeth was so wrathful, even while supposing that the offer had been gratefully declined, what were likely to be her emotions when she should be informed that it had been gratefully accepted. The Earl already began to tremble at the probable consequences of his mal-adroitness. Grave was the error he had committed in getting himself made governor-general against orders ; graver still, perhaps fatal, the blunder of not being swift to confess his fault, and cry for pardon, before other tongues should have time to aggravate his offence. Yet even now he shrank from addressing the Queen in person, but hoped to conjure the rising storm by means of the magic wand of the Lord-Treasurer. He implored his friend's interposition to shield him in the emergency, and begged that at least her Majesty and the lords of council would suspend their judgment until Mr. Davison should

¹ Burghley to Leicester, MS. before cited.

deliver those messages and explanations with which, fully freighted, he was about to set sail from the Brill.

"If my reasons seem to your wisdoms," said he, "other than such as might well move a true and a faithful careful man to her Majesty to do as I have done, I do desire, for my mistaking offence, to bear the burden of it; to be disavowed with all displeasure and disgrace; a matter of as great reproach and grief as ever can happen to any man." He begged that another person might be sent as soon as possible in his place—protesting, however, by his faith in Christ, that he had done only what he was bound to do by his regard for her Majesty's service—and that when he set foot in the country he had no more expected to be made Governor of the Netherlands than to be made King of Spain.¹ Certainly he had been paying dear for the honour, if honour it was, and he had not intended on setting forth for the Provinces to ruin himself, for the sake of an empty title. His motives—and he was honest, when he so avowed them—were motives of state at least as much as of self-advancement."² "I have no cause," he said, "to have played the fool thus far for myself; first, to have her Majesty's displeasure, which no kingdom in the world could make me willingly deserve; next, to undo myself in my later days; to consume all that should have kept me all my life in one half year. But I must thank God for all, and am most heartily grieved at her Majesty's heavy displeasure. I neither desire to live, nor to see my country with it."³

And at this bitter thought, he began to sigh like furnace, and to shed the big tears of penitence.

"For if I have not done her Majesty good service at this time," he said, "I shall never hope to do her any, but will withdraw me into some out-corner of the world, where I will languish out the rest of my few—too many—days, praying ever for her Majesty's long and prosperous life, and with this only comfort to live an exile, that this disgrace hath happened

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 96, 97, ⁸/₁₀ Feb. 1586.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

for no other cause but for my mere regard for her Majesty's estate."¹

Having painted this dismal picture of the probable termination to his career—not in the hope of melting Burghley, but of touching the heart of Elizabeth—he proceeded to argue the point in question with much logic and sagacity. He had satisfied himself on his arrival in the Provinces, that, if he did not take the governor-generalship some other person would; and that it certainly was for the interest of her Majesty that her devoted servant, rather than an indifferent person, should be placed in that important position. He maintained that the Queen had intimated to him, in private, her willingness that he should accept the office in question, provided the proposition should come from the States and not from her; he reasoned that the double nature of his functions—being general and counsellor for her, as well as general and counsellor for the Provinces—made his acceptance of the authority conferred on him almost indispensable; that for him to be merely commander over five thousand English troops, when an abler soldier than himself, Sir John Norris, was at their head, was hardly worthy her Majesty's service or himself, and that in reality the Queen had lost nothing, by his appointment, but had gained much benefit and honour by thus having "the whole command of the Provinces, of their forces by land and sea, of their towns and treasures, with knowledge of all their secrets of state."²

Then, relapsing into a vein of tender but reproachful melancholy, he observed, that, if it had been any man but himself that had done as he had done, he would have been thanked, not censured. "But such is now my wretched case," he said, "as for my faithful, true, and loving heart to her Majesty and my country, I have utterly undone myself. For favour, I have disgrace; for reward, utter spoil and ruin. But if this taking upon me the name of governor is so evil taken as it hath deserved dishonour, discredit, disfavour, with

¹ Bruce, 98, $\frac{8}{13}$ Feb. 1586.

Ibid. 100-102, $\frac{8}{13}$ Feb. 1586.

all griefs that may be laid upon a man, I must receive it as deserved of God and not of my Queen, whom I have revered with all humility, and whom I have loved with all fidelity."¹

This was the true way, no doubt, to reach the heart of Elizabeth, and Leicester had always plenty of such shafts in his quiver. Unfortunately he had delayed too long, and even now he dared not take a direct aim. He feared to write to the Queen herself, thinking that his so doing, "while she had such concepts of him, would only trouble her," and he therefore continued to employ the Lord-Treasurer and Mr. Secretary as his mediators. Thus he committed error upon error.

Meantime, as if there had not been procrastination enough, Davison was loitering at the Brill, detained by wind and weather. Two days after the letter, just cited, had been despatched to Walsingham, Leicester sent an impatient ¹⁰ Feb. 1586. message to the envoy. "I am heartily sorry, with all my heart," he said, "to hear of your long stay at Brill, the wind serving so fair as it hath done these two days. I would have laid any wager that you had been in England ere this. I pray you make haste, lest our cause take too great a prejudice there ere you come, although I cannot fear it, because it is so good and honest. I pray you imagine in what care I dwell till I shall hear from you, albeit some way very resolute."²

Thus it was obvious that he had no secret despair of his cause when it should be thoroughly laid before the Queen. The wonder was that he had added the offence of long silence to the sin of disobedience. Davison had sailed, however, before the receipt of the Earl's letter. He had been furnished with careful instructions upon the subject of his mission. He was to show how eager the States had been to have Leicester for their absolute governor—which was perfectly true—and how

¹ Bruce, 100-102, just cited.

² Leicester to Davison, ¹⁰ Feb. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

anxious the Earl had been to decline the proffered honour—which was certainly false, if contemporary record and the minutes of the States-General are to be believed. He was to sketch the general confusion which had descended upon the country, the quarrelling of politicians, and the discontent of officers and soldiers, from out of all which chaos one of two results was sure to arise: the erection of a single chieftain, or a reconciliation of the Provinces with Spain. That it would be impossible for the Earl to exercise the double functions with which he was charged—of general of her Majesty's forces, and general and chief counsellor of the States—if any other man than himself should be appointed governor, was obvious. It was equally plain that the Provinces could only be kept at her Majesty's disposition by choosing the course which, at their own suggestion, had been adopted. The offer of the government by the States, and its acceptance by the Earl, were the logical consequence of the step which the Queen had already taken. It was thus only that England could retain her hold upon the country, and even upon the cautionary towns. As to a reconciliation of the Provinces with Spain—which would have been the probable result of Leicester's rejection of the proposition made by the States—it was unnecessary to do more than allude to such a catastrophe. No one but a madman could doubt that, in such an event, the subjugation of England was almost certain.¹

But before the arrival of the ambassador, the Queen had been thoroughly informed as to the whole extent of the Earl's delinquency. Dire was the result. The wintry gales which had been lashing the North Sea, and preventing the unfortunate Davison from setting forth on his disastrous mission, were nothing to the tempest of royal wrath which had been shaking the court-world to its centre. The Queen had been swearing most fearfully ever since she read the news, which Leicester had not dared to communicate directly to herself. No one was allowed to speak a word in extenuation of the

¹ Remembrances for Mr. Davison, in Bruce, 80-82, Feb. 1586.

favourite's offence. Burghley, who lifted up his voice somewhat feebly to appease her wrath, was bid, with a curse, to hold his peace. So he took to his bed—partly from prudence, partly from gout—and thus sheltered himself for a season from the peltings of the storm. Walsingham, more manful, stood to his post, but could not gain a hearing. It was the culprit that should have spoken, and spoken in time. "Why, why did you not write yourself?" was the plaintive cry of all the Earl's friends, from highest to humblest. "But write to her now," they exclaimed, "at any rate; and, above all, send her a present, a love-gift." "Lay out two or three hundred crowns in some rare thing, for a token to her Majesty," said Christopher Hatton.¹

Strange that his colleagues and his rivals should have been obliged to advise Leicester upon the proper course to pursue; that they—not himself—should have been the first to perceive that it was the enraged woman, even more than the offended sovereign, who was to be propitiated and soothed. In truth, all the woman had been aroused in Elizabeth's bosom. She was displeased that her favourite should derive power and splendour from any source but her own bounty. She was furious that his wife, whom she hated, was about to share in his honours. For the mischievous tongues of court-ladies had been collecting or fabricating many unpleasant rumours. A swarm of idle but piquant stories had been buzzing about the Queen's ears, and stinging her into a frenzy of jealousy. The Countess—it was said—was on the point of setting forth for the Netherlands, to join the Earl, with a train of courtiers and ladies, coaches and side-saddles, such as were never seen before—where the two were about to establish themselves in conjugal felicity, as well as almost royal state. What a prospect for the jealous and imperious sovereign! "Coaches and side-saddles! She would show the upstarts that there was one Queen, and that her name was Elizabeth, and that there was no court but hers." And so she continued to storm

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 113, 114, $\frac{11}{21}$ Feb. 1586.

and swear, and threaten unutterable vengeance, till all her courtiers quaked in their shoes.¹

Thomas Dudley, however, warmly contradicted the report, declaring, of his own knowledge, that the Countess had no wish to go to the Provinces, nor the Earl any intention of receiving her there. This information was at once conveyed to the Queen, "and," said Dudley, "it did greatly pacify her stomach."² His friends did what they could to maintain the governor's cause; but Burghley, Walsingham, Hatton, and the rest of them, were all "at their wits' end,"³ and were nearly distraught at the delay in Davison's arrival. Meantime the Queen's stomach was not so much pacified but that she was determined to humiliate the Earl with the least possible delay. Having waited sufficiently long for his explanations, she now appointed Sir Thomas Heneage as special commissioner to the States, without waiting any longer. Her wrath vented itself at once in the preamble to the instructions for this agent.

"Whereas," she said, "we have been given to understand that the Earl of Leicester hath in a very contemptuous sort—contrary to our express commandment given unto him by ourself, accepted of an offer of a more absolute government made by the States unto him, than was agreed on between us and their commissioners—which kind of contemptible manner of proceeding giveth the world just cause to think that there is not that reverent respect carried towards us by our subjects as in duty appertaineth; especially seeing so notorious a contempt committed by one whom we have raised up and yielded in the eye of the world, even from the beginning of our reign,

¹ "It was told her Majesty," wrote Thomas Dudley, "that my lady was prepared presently to come over to your Excellency, with such a train of ladies and gentlewomen, and such rich coaches, litters, and side-saddles, as her Majesty had none such; and that there should be such a court of ladies as should far pass her Majesty's court here. This information (though most false) did not a little stir her Majesty to extreme choler and dislike of all

your doings there; saying, with great oaths, she would have no more courts under her obeisance than her own, and would revoke you from thence with all speed. This Mr. Vice-Chamberlain (Hatton) told me in great secret, and afterwards Mr. Secretary, and last of all my Lord Treasurer."

Bruce's '*Leyce. Corresp.*' 112, ¹¹/₂₁ Feb. 1586.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

as great portion of our favour as ever subject enjoyed at any prince's hands ; we therefore, holding nothing dearer than our honour, and considering that no one thing could more touch our reputation than to induce so open and public a faction of a prince, and work a greater reproach than contempt at a subject's hand, without reparation of our honour, have found it necessary to send you unto him, as well to charge him with the said contempt, as also to execute such other things as we think meet to be done, for the justifying of ourselves to the world, as the repairing of the indignity cast upon us by his undutiful manner of proceeding towards us. . . . And for that we find ourselves also not well dealt withal by the States, in that they have pressed the said Earl, without our assent or privity, to accept of a more absolute government than was agreed on between us and their commissioners, we have also thought meet that you shall charge them therewith, according to the directions hereafter ensuing. And to the end there may be no delay used in the execution of that which we think meet to be presently done, you shall charge the said States, even as they tender the continuance of our good-will towards them, to proceed to the speedy execution of our request."¹

After this trumpet-like preamble it may be supposed that the blast which followed would be piercing and shrill. The instructions, in truth, consisted in wild, scornful flourishes upon one theme. The word contempt had occurred five times in the brief preamble. It was repeated in almost every line of the instructions.

"You shall let the Earl" (our cousin no longer) "understand," said the Queen, "how highly and justly we are offended with his acceptance of the government, which we do repute to be a very *great and strange contempt*, least looked for at our hands, being, as he is, a creature of our own." His omission to acquaint her by letter with the causes moving him "so *contemptuously* to break" her commandment, his

¹ The Queen to Sir Thomas He-
seage, $\frac{10}{20}$ Feb. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

The rest of the document is given in
Bruce, 105 *seq.*

delay in sending Davison "to answer the said *contempt*," had much "aggravated the fault," although the Queen protested herself unable to imagine any "excuse for so *manifest a contempt*." The States were to be informed that she "held it strange" that "this creature of her own" should have been pressed by them to "commit so notorious a *contempt*" against her, both on account of this very exhibition of contempt on Leicester's part, and because they thereby "shewed themselves to have a very slender and weak conceit of her judgment, by pressing a minister of hers to accept that which she had refused, as though her long experience in government had not taught her to discover what was fit to do in matters of state." As the result of such a proceeding would be to disgrace her in the eyes of mankind, by inducing an opinion that her published solemn declaration on this great subject had been intended to abuse the world, he was directed—in order to remove the hard conceit justly to be taken by the world, "in consideration of *the said contempt*,"—to make a public and open resignation of the government in the place where he had accepted the same.¹

Thus it had been made obvious to the unlucky "creature of her own," that the Queen did not easily digest "*contempt*." Nevertheless these instructions to Heneage were gentle, compared with the fierce billet which she addressed directly to the Earl. It was brief, too, as the posy of a ring; and thus it ran:—"To my Lord of Leicester, from the Queen, by Sir Thomas Heneage. How contemptuously we conceive ourself to have been used by you, you shall by this bearer understand, whom we have expressly sent unto you to charge you withal. We could never have imagined, had we not seen it fall out in experience, that a man raised up by ourself, and extraordinarily favoured by us above any other subject of this land, would have, in so contemptible a sort, broken our commandment, in a cause that so greatly toucheth us in honour; whereof, although you have showed yourself to make but little account, in most undutiful a sort, you may not therefore think

¹ The Queen to Sir Thomas Heneage, just cited.

that we have so little care of the reparation thereof as we mind to pass so great a wrong in silence unredressed. And therefore our express pleasure and commandment is, that—all delays and excuses laid apart—you do presently, upon the duty of your allegiance, obey and fulfil whatsoever the bearer hereof shall direct you to do in our name. Whereof fail not, as you will answer the contrary at your uttermost peril.”¹

Here was no billing and cooing, certainly, but a terse, biting phraseology, about which there could be no misconception.

By the same messenger the Queen also sent a formal letter to the States-General; the epistle—*mutatis mutandis*—being also addressed to the state-council.

In this document her Majesty expressed her great surprise that Leicester should have accepted their offer of the absolute government, “both for police and war,” when she had so expressly rejected it herself. “To tell the truth,” she observed, “you seem to have treated us with very little respect, and put a too manifest insult upon us, in presenting anew to one of our subjects the same proposition which we had already declined, without at least waiting for our answer whether we should like it or no; as if we had not sense enough to be able to decide upon what we ought to accept or refuse.”² She proceeded to express her dissatisfaction with the course pursued, because so repugnant to her published declaration, in which she had stated to the world her intention of aiding the Provinces, without meddling in the least with the sovereignty of the country. “The contrary would now be believed,” she said, “at least by those who take the liberty of censuring, according to their pleasure, the actions of princes.” Thus her honour was at stake. She signified her will, therefore, that, in order to convince the world of her sincerity, the authority conferred should be revoked, and that “the Earl,” whom she had decided to recall very soon,³ should, during his brief residence

¹ Bruce's ‘Leyc. Corresp.’ 110, $\frac{10}{-}$
Feb. 1586. S. P. Office, $\frac{10 \text{ and } 14}{20 \quad 24}$ Feb. $\frac{30}{-}$
1586, MS.

² Minute to the States General: the

like to the Council of State—*mutatis mutandis*. (S. P. Office MS., Feb. $\frac{12}{-}$ 1585.)

³ “Lequel sommes deliberée de rap-
peller bientôt,” &c. MS. *ubi sup.*

there, only exercise the power agreed upon by the original contract. She warmly reiterated her intention, however, of observing inviolably the promise of assistance which she had given to the States. "And if," she said, "any malicious or turbulent spirits should endeavour, perchance, to persuade the people that this our refusal proceeds from lack of affection or honest disposition to assist you—instead of being founded only on respect for our honour, which is dearer to us than life—we beg you, by every possible means, to shut their mouths, and prevent their pernicious designs."¹

Thus, heavily laden with the royal wrath, Heneage was on the point of leaving London for the Netherlands, on the very day upon which Davison arrived, charged with deprecatory missives from that country. After his long detention he had a short passage, crossing from the Brill to Margate in a single night. Coming immediately to London, he sent to Walsingham to inquire which way the wind was blowing at court, but received a somewhat discouraging reply. "Your long detention by his Lordship," said the Secretary, "has wounded the whole cause;" adding, that he thought her Majesty would not speak with him. On the other hand, it seemed indispensable for him to go to the court, because if the Queen should hear of his arrival before he had presented himself, she was likely to be more angry than ever.²

So, the same afternoon, Davison waited upon Walsingham, and found him in a state of despondency. "She takes his Lordship's acceptance of the government most haynously," said Sir Francis, "and has resolved to send Sir Thomas Heneage at once, with orders for him to resign the office. She has been threatening you and Sir Philip Sidney, whom she considers the chief actors and persuaders in the matter, according to information received from some persons about my Lord of Leicester."³

Davison protested himself amazed at the Secretary's dis-

¹ "Vous taschiez par tous moyens de cloire la bouche et empêcher les pernicious desseins de tel dangereux instruments," &c. (Ibid.)

² Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 117 118, Feb. 1586.

³ Ibid.

course, and at once took great pains to show the reasons by which all parties had been influenced in the matter of the government. He declared roundly that if the Queen should carry out her present intentions, the Earl would be most unworthily disgraced, the cause utterly overthrown, the Queen's honour perpetually stained, and that her kingdom would incur great disaster.

Directly after this brief conversation, Walsingham went up stairs to the Queen, while Davison proceeded to the apartments of Sir Christopher Hatton. Thence he was soon summoned to the royal presence, and found that he had not been misinformed as to the temper of her Majesty. The Queen was indeed in a passion, and began swearing at Davison so soon as he got into the chamber ; abusing Leicester for having accepted the offer of the States, against her many times repeated commandment, and the ambassador for not having opposed his course. The thing had been done, she said, in contempt of her, as if her consent had been of no consequence, or as if the matter in no way concerned her.

So soon as she paused to take breath, the envoy modestly, but firmly, appealed to her reason, that she would at any rate lend him a patient and favourable ear, in which case he doubted not that she would form a more favourable opinion of the case than she had hitherto done. He then entered into a long discourse upon the state of the Netherlands before the arrival of Leicester, the inclination in many quarters for a peace, the "despair that any sound and good fruit would grow of her Majesty's cold beginning," the general unpopularity of the States' government, the "corruption, partiality, and confusion," which were visible everywhere, the perilous condition of the whole cause, and the absolute necessity of some immediate reform.

"It was necessary," said Davison, "that some one person of wisdom and authority should take the helm. Among the Netherlanders none was qualified for such a charge. Lord Maurice is a child, poor, and of but little respect among them. Elector Truchsess, Count Hohenlo, Meurs, and the

rest, strangers and incapable of the burden. These considerations influenced the States to the step which had been taken, without which all the rest of her benevolence was to little purpose." Although the contract between the commissioners and the Queen had not literally provided for such an arrangement, yet it had always been contemplated by the States, who had left themselves without a head until the arrival of the Earl.

"Under one pretext or another," continued the envoy, "my Lord of Leicester had long delayed to satisfy them,"—(and in so stating he went somewhat further in defence of his absent friend than the facts would warrant), "for he neither flatly refused it, nor was willing to accept, until your Majesty's pleasure should be known."¹ Certainly the records show no reservation of his acceptance until the Queen had been consulted; but the defence by Davison of the offending Earl was so much the more courageous.

"At length, wearied by their importunity, moved with their reasons, and compelled by necessity, he thought it better to take the course he did," proceeded the diplomatist, "for otherwise he must have been an eye-witness of the dismemberment of the whole country, which could not be kept together but by a reposed hope in her Majesty's found favour, which had been utterly despaired of by his refusal. He thought it better by accepting to increase the honour, profit, and surety, of her Majesty, and the good of the cause, than, by refusing, to utterly hazard the one, and overthrow the other."²

To all this and more, well and warmly urged by Davison, the Queen listened by fits and starts, often interrupting his discourse by violent abuse of Leicester, accusing him of contempt for her, charging him with thinking more of his own particular greatness than of her honour and service, and then "digressing into old griefs," said the envoy, "too long and tedious to write." She vehemently denounced Davison also for dereliction of duty in not opposing the measure; but he

¹ Bruce, 120, same date.

² Ibid.

manfully declared that he never deemed so meanly of her Majesty or of his Lordship as to suppose that she would send him, or that he would go to the Provinces, merely "to take command of the relics of Mr. Norris's worn and decayed troops." Such a change, protested Davison, was utterly unworthy a person of the Earl's quality, and utterly unsuited to the necessity of the time and state.¹

But Davison went farther in defence of Leicester. He had been present at many of the conferences with the Netherland envoys during the preceding summer in England, and he now told the Queen stoutly to her face that she herself, or at any rate one of her chief counsellors, in her hearing and his, had expressed her royal determination not to prevent the acceptance of whatever authority the states might choose to confer, by any one whom she might choose to send. She had declined to accept it in person, but she had been willing that it should be wielded by her deputy; and this remembrance of his had been confirmed by that of one of the commissioners since their return. She had never—Davison maintained—sent him one single line having any bearing on the subject. Under such circumstances, "I might have been accused of madness," said he, "to have dissuaded an action in my poor opinion so necessary and expedient for your Majesty's honour, surety, and greatness." If it were to do over again, he avowed, and "were his opinion demanded, he could give no other advice than that which he had given, having received no contrary commandment from her Highness."²

And so ended the first evening's long and vehement debate, and Davison departed, "leaving her," as he said, "much qualified, though in many points unsatisfied."³ She had however, absolutely refused to receive a letter from Leicester, with which he had been charged, but which, in her opinion, had better have been written two months before.

The next day, it seemed, after all, that Heneage was to be despatched, "in great heat," upon his mission. Davison accordingly requested an immediate audience. So soon as

¹ Bruce, 121, same date.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid. 122, same date.

admitted to the presence he burst into tears, and implored the Queen to pause before she should inflict the contemplated disgrace on one whom she had hitherto so highly esteemed, and, by so doing, dishonour herself and imperil both countries. But the Queen was more furious than ever that morning, returning at every pause in the envoy's discourse to harp upon the one string—"How dared he come to such a decision without at least imparting it to me?"—and so on, as so many times before. And again Davison, with all the eloquence and with every soothing art he had at command, essayed to pour oil upon the waves. Nor was he entirely unsuccessful; for presently the Queen became so calm again that he ventured once more to present the rejected letter of the Earl. She broke the seal, and at sight of the well-known handwriting she became still more gentle, and so soon as she had read the first of her favourite's honied phrases she thrust the precious document into her pocket, in order to read it afterwards, as Davison observed, at her leisure.¹

The opening thus successfully made, and the envoy having thus, "by many insinuations," prepared her to lend him a "more patient and willing ear than she had vouchsafed before," he again entered into a skilful and impassioned argument to show the entire wisdom of the course pursued by the Earl.²

It is unnecessary to repeat the conversation. Suffice to say that no man could have more eloquently and faithfully supported an absent friend under difficulties than Davison now defended the Earl. The line of argument is already familiar to the reader, and, in truth, the Queen had nothing to reply, save to insist upon the governor's delinquency in maintaining so long and inexplicable a silence. And at this thought, in spite of the envoy's eloquence, she went off again

¹ Bruce, 122, $\frac{17}{2}$ Feb. 1586.

² Ibid. "The beginning of our comedy was uncommon sharp," said Davison, "but this much I do be bold to assure you, that if I had not arrived

as I did, both his Lordship had been utterly disowned and the cause overthrown." Davison to Herle, 17 Feb. 1586. (Brit. Mus. Galba, C. viii. 33, MS.)

in a paroxysm of anger, abusing the Earl, and deeply censuring Davison for his "peremptory and partial dealing."¹

"I had conceived a better opinion of you," she said, "and I had intended more good to you than I now find you worthy of."

"I humbly thank your Highness," replied the ambassador, "but I take yourself to witness that I have never affected or sought any such grace at your hands. And if your Majesty persists in the dangerous course on which you are now entering, I only pray your leave, in recompense for all my travails, to retire myself home, where I may spend the rest of my life in praying for you, whom Salvation itself is not able to save, if these purposes are continued. Henceforth, Madam, he is to be deemed happiest who is least interested in the public service."²

And so ended the second day's debate. The next morning the Lord-Treasurer, who, according to Davison, employed himself diligently—as did also Walsingham and Hatton³—in dissuading the Queen from the violent measures which she had resolved upon, effected so much of a change as to procure the insertion of those qualifying clauses in Heneage's instructions which had been previously disallowed. The open and public disgrace of the Earl, which was to have been peremptorily demanded, was now to be deferred, if such a measure seemed detrimental to the public service. Her Majesty, however, protested herself as deeply offended as ever, although she had consented to address a brief, somewhat mysterious, but benignant letter of compliment to the States.⁴

¹ Bruce, 123, same date.

² Ibid. 124, same date.

³ Ibid. 143, ^{28 Feb.}_{10 Mar.} 1586; but to Walsingham Leicester "owed more," according to Davison, "for his constant friendship and sufferance for his sake than to all others at court." Davison to Harle. (Brit. Mus. Galba, C. viii. MS.)

⁴ "Monsieur Davison nous a bien au long discours et représenté," said the Queen, "de quel zele vous avez été poussés à faire l'offre du gouvernement absolu de ces pays la au Comte de Leycestre, avec les plus grandes signes et demonstrations d'une vehemente et devotionnee affection envers nous, qu'on scauroit desirer, dont on nous pourroit à bon droit taxer d'ingratitude, si eussions oublié de vous

Soon after this Davison retired for a few days from the court, having previously written to the Earl that "the heat of her Majesty's offence to his Lordship was abating every day somewhat, and that she was disposed both to hear and to speak more temperately of him."¹

He implored him accordingly to a "more diligent entertaining of her by wise letters and messages, wherein his slackness hitherto appeared to have bred a great part of this unkindness."² He observed also that the "traffic of peace was still going on underhand; but whether to use it as a second string to our bow, if the first should fail, or of any settled inclination thereunto, he could not affirm."³

Meantime Sir Thomas Heneage was despatched on his mission to the States, despite all the arguments and expostulations of Walsingham, Burghley, Hatton, and Davison. All the Queen's counsellors were unequivocally in favour of sustaining Leicester; and Heneage was not a little embarrassed as to the proper method of conducting the affair. Everything, in truth, was in a most confused condition. He hardly understood to what power he was accredited. "Heneage writes even now unto me," said Walsingham to Davison, "that he cannot yet receive any information who be the States, which he thinketh will be a great nainer unto him in his negotiation. I have told him that it is an assembly much like that of our burgesses that represent the State, and that my Lord of Leicester may cause some of them to meet together, unto whom he may deliver his letters and messages."⁴ Thus the new envoy was to request the culprit to summon the very assembly by which his downfall and dis-

en remercier bien expressement, et de vous rendre certains des effects reciproques que cela cause en nous d'une entiere affection envers vous, combien que pour plusieurs grandes et importantes considerations ne puissions nous accorder a l'acceptation du dit offre. . . . Nous asseurant que si scavez de quelle consequence sont les raisons et considerations que ne nous pouvons communiquer pour plusieurs respects d'importance, et sur les quelles notre repos est fondé, vous memes seriez de

notre advis, et demeureriez contents du dict refus, lequel sera cause d'augmenter encores de tant plus le soin qu'avons promis d'avoir du bien et conversation de ces pays la." Minute of H. Majesty's Letter to the States General. (S. P. Office MS. Feb. 1581.)

¹ Bruce, 124, 17 Feb. 1586.

² Ibid. 125, same date.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Walsingham to Davison, 25 Feb. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

grace were to be solemnized, as formally as had been so recently his elevation to the height of power. The prospect was not an agreeable one, and the less so because of his general want of familiarity with the constitutional forms of the country he was about to visit. Davison accordingly, at the request of Sir Francis, furnished Heneage with much valuable information and advice upon the subject.¹

¹ "The government as it is now," said he, "you shall find altered from the form whereof I delivered you some notes the last year. The general commandment reets presently in the hands of my Lord of Leicester, as governor of the countries for them, over and besides his lieutenancy from the Queen. The nature of his authority reaches to an absolute command in matters belonging to the wars, though in civil things limited to the lawful power of other governors-general in times past, as you shall better perceive by the commission and acts themselves, which I know my Lord will not conceal from you. The contributions towards the war of 200,000 florins, or 20,000*l.* the month, agreed to by the four provinces of Holland, Zeeland, Friesland, and Utrecht, are to be levied chiefly on the ordinary means of consumption, or things spent and consumed in the country, which in Holland alone, doth now amount to 90,000 florins monthly, besides the quota of the other provinces, and over and above their customs upon all merchandize going out and coming in, and, besides, all this may be levied in the other provinces of Gelderland, Overijssel, Brabant and Flanders. They are to put into my Lord's hands the letting and farming of these impositions yet in force till April next, which, coming short of the general sum, they have promised to supply by a contribution extraordinary, such as tax on land and other things, whereof my Lord can and will thoroughly inform you. The sovereignty, notwithstanding, remains *penes ordines*, which we call the Estates. These consist of the whole provinces united, to the number ordinarily of some eighteen or twenty persons, each province deputing some four or five, as the occasion and

time require. These are chosen out by their provinces, and are sent to the general assembly upon extraordinary occasions—as when there is occasion for making some new ordinance, either for contributions or other occurrences, concerning the whole generality. The place of their ordinary meeting is the Hague. The time of their continuance together is not longer than till the matter in question be resolved, or remitted to a new report, which often happeneth. These having remained together upon my Lord's coming till he had agreed to the acceptance of the government, were to depart home—about the time of my coming thence—to return within some few days after for the determining of a new proposition for the increase of their ordinary contributions, and are by this time, I think, dissolved again. In this case, your letters to them—if you have any—must tarry a new convocation, for to them only it appertains to answer the matter of my Lord's election, forasmuch as concerneth the country. The council of estate, resident with my Lord, hath been chosen since his election to the government, composed of some ten or twelve persons, at the denomination of the provinces, and my Lord's election. These you shall find attending upon my Lord as his ordinary assistants in all matters concerning the public government, but to them it belongeth not to deliver anything touching this case of my Lord's without special direction. And thus much touching the form of that government, as far forth as the time will suffer me to discourse unto you, or may belong to your present charge, leaving you for other things to be more particularly satisfied by Sir Philip Sidney, Mr. Killigrew, and others of your friends, at your arrival there."

Thus provided with information, forewarned of danger, furnished with a double set of letters from the Queen to the States—the first expressed in language of extreme exasperation, the others couched in almost affectionate terms—and laden with messages brimfull of wrathful denunciation from her Majesty to one who was notoriously her Majesty's dearly-beloved, Sir Thomas Heneage set forth on his mission. These were perilous times for the Davisons and the Heneages, when even Leicesters and Burghleys were scarcely secure.

Meantime the fair weather at court could not be depended upon from one day to another, and the clouds were perpetually returning after the rain.

"Since my second and third day's audience," said Davison, "the storms I met with at my arrival have overblown and abated daily. On Saturday again she fell into some new heat, which lasted not long. This day I was myself at the court, and found her in reasonable good terms, though she will not yet seem satisfied to me either with the matter or manner of your proceeding, notwithstanding all the labour I have taken in that behalf. Yet I find not her Majesty altogether so sharp as some men look, though her favour has outwardly cooled in respect both of this action and of our plain proceeding with her here in defence thereof."¹

The poor Countess—whose imaginary exodus, with the long

Having given this correct and graphic outline of the government to which Heneage had thus been despatched, upon such delicate and perilous business, Davison proceeded to whisper a word of timely caution in his ear.

"I cannot but let you know," he said, "how heartily sorry I am that it is not more plausible to my Lord, and profitable to that poor country. What may move her Majesty to take this course I know not; but this I protest unto you before God, that I know not what other course the Estates or my Lord might have taken than they have done, nor how the country may be saved, if this act be discountenanced and overthrown. To advise

you how to carry yourself I will not take upon me, and yet dare be bold to affirm this much, that your message, if it be not all the better handled in your wisdom, cannot but breed utter dishonour to my Lord, ruin to the cause, and repentance ere long to her Majesty's self, which will better appear unto you when you shall be there to look into their estate. But seeing God hath so disposed thereof, I will cast my care upon his providence, and recommend the cause to Him that governs all." Davison to Heneage, 26 Feb. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 142,
28 Feb.
1586.
18 Mar.

procession of coaches and side-saddles, had excited so much ire—found herself in a most distressing position. “I have not seen my Lady these ten or twelve days,” said Davison. “To-morrow I hope to do my duty towards her. I found her greatly troubled with tempestuous news she received from court, but somewhat comforted when she understood how I had proceeded with her Majesty. . . . But these passions overblown, I hope her Majesty will have a gracious regard both towards myself and the cause.”¹

But the passions seemed not likely to blow over so soon as was desirable. Leicester’s brother the Earl of Warwick took a most gloomy view of the whole transaction, and hoarser than the raven’s was his boding tone.

“Well, our mistress’s extreme rage doth increase rather than diminish,” he wrote, “and she giveth out great threatening words against you. Therefore make the best assurance you can for yourself, and trust not her oath, for that her malice is great and unquenchable in the wisest of their opinions here, and as for other friendships, as far as I can learn, it is as doubtful as the other. Wherefore, my good brother, repose your whole trust in God, and He will defend you in despite of all your enemies. And let this be a great comfort to you, and so it is likewise to myself and all your assured friends, and that is, that you were never so honoured and loved in your life amongst all good people as you are at this day, only for dealing so nobly and wisely in this action as you have done; so that, whatsoever cometh of it, you have done your part. I praise God from my heart for it. Once again, have great care of yourself, I mean for your safety, and if she will needs revoke you, to the overthrowing of the cause, if I were as you, if I could not be assured *there*, *I would go to the farthest part of Christendom rather than ever come into England again*. Take heed whom you trust, for that *you have some false boys about you*.”²

And the false boys were busy enough, and seemed likely

¹ Bruce’s ‘Leyc. Corresp.’ 144. MS. just cited.

² Ibid. 150, 151, $\frac{6}{16}$ March, 1586.

to triumph in the result of their schemes. For a glance into the secret correspondence of Mary of Scotland has already revealed the Earl to us constantly surrounded by men in masks. Many of those nearest his person, and of highest credit out of England, were his deadly foes, sworn to compass his dishonour, his confusion, and eventually his death, and in correspondence with his most powerful adversaries at home and abroad. Certainly his path was slippery and perilous along those icy summits of power, and he had need to look well to his footsteps.

Before Heneage had arrived in the Netherlands, Sir Thomas Shirley, despatched by Leicester to England with a commission to procure supplies for the famishing soldiers, and, if possible, to mitigate the Queen's wrath, had been admitted more than once to her Majesty's presence. He had fought the Earl's battle as manfully as Davison had done, and, like that envoy, had received nothing in exchange for his plausible arguments but bitter words and big oaths. Eight days after his arrival he was introduced by Hatton into the privy chamber, and at the moment of his entrance was received with a volley of execrations.¹

"I did expressly and peremptorily forbid his acceptance of the absolute government, in the hearing of divers of my council," said the Queen.

Shirley.—"The necessity of the case was imminent, your Highness. It was his Lordship's intent to do all for your Majesty's service. Those countries did expect him as a governor at his first landing, and the States durst do no other than satisfy the people also with that opinion. The people's mislike of their present government is such and so great as that the name of States is grown odious amongst them. Therefore the States, doubting the furious rage of the people, conferred the authority upon his Lordship with incessant suit to him to receive it. Notwithstanding this, however, he did deny it until he saw plainly both confusion and ruin of that

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 172, ¹⁴/₂₄ March, 1586.

country if he should refuse. On the other hand, when he had seen into their estates, his lordship found great profit and commodity like to come unto your Majesty by your acceptance of it. Your Highness may now have garrisons of English in as many towns as pleaseth you, without any more charge than you are now at. Nor can any peace be made with Spain at any time hereafter, but through you and by you. Your Majesty should remember, likewise, that if a man of another nation had been chosen governor it might have wrought great danger. Moreover it would have been an indignity that your lieutenant-general should of necessity be under him that so should have been elected. Finally, this is a stop to any other that may affect the place of government there."

Queen (who has manifested many signs of impatience during this discourse).—"Your speech is all in vain. His Lordship's proceeding is sufficient to make me infamous to all princes, having protested the contrary, as I have done, in a book which is translated into divers and sundry languages. His Lordship, being my servant, a creature of my own, ought not, in duty towards me, have entered into this course without my knowledge and good allowance."

Shirley.—"But the world hath conceived a high judgment of your Majesty's great wisdom and providence, shown by your assailing the King of Spain at one time both in the Low Countries and also by Sir Francis Drake. I do assure myself that the same judgment which did first cause you to take this in hand must continue a certain knowledge in your Majesty that one of these actions must needs stand much better by the other. If Sir Frances do prosper, then all is well. And though he should not prosper, yet this hold that his Lordship hath taken for you on the Low Countries must always assure an honourable peace at your Highness's pleasure. I beseech your Majesty to remember that to the King of Spain the government of his Lordship is no greater matter than if he were but your lieutenant-general there; but the voyage of Sir Francis is of much greater offence than all."

Queen (interrupting).—"I can very well answer for Sir

Francis. Moreover, if need be, the gentleman careth not if I should disavow him."

Shirley.—"Even so standeth my Lord, if your disavowing of him may also stand with your Highness's favour towards him. Nevertheless, should this bruit of your mislike of his Lordship's authority there come unto the ears of those people—being a nation both sudden and suspicious, and having been heretofore used to stratagem—I fear it may work some strange notion in them, considering that, at this time, there is an increase of taxation raised upon them, the bestowing whereof perchance they know not of. His Lordship's giving up of the government may leave them altogether without government, and in worse case than they were ever in before. For *now the authority of the States is dissolved, and his Lordship's government is the only thing that holdeth them together.* I do beseech your Highness, then, to consider well of it, and if there be any private cause for which you take grief against his Lordship, nevertheless, to have regard unto the public cause, and to have a care of your own safety, which in many wise men's opinions, standeth much upon the good maintenance and upholding of this matter."

Queen.—"I believe nothing of what you say concerning the dissolving of the authority of the States. I know well enough that the States do remain states still. I mean not to do harm to the cause, but only to reform that which his Lordship hath done beyond his warrant from me."¹

And with this the Queen swept suddenly from the apartment. Sir Thomas, at different stages of the conversation, had in vain besought her to accept a letter from the Earl which had been entrusted to his care. She obstinately refused to touch it. Shirley had even had recourse to stratagem: affecting ignorance on many points concerning which the Queen desired information, and suggesting that doubtless she would find those matters fully explained in his Lordship's letter.² The artifice was in vain, and the discussion was, on

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 171-176, $\frac{14}{4}$ March, 1586.

² Ibid.

the whole, unsatisfactory. Yet there is no doubt that the Queen had had the worst of the argument, and she was far too sagacious a politician not to feel the weight of that which had been urged so often in defence of the course pursued. But it was with her partly a matter of temper and offended pride, perhaps even of wounded affection.

On the following morning Shirley saw the Queen walking in the garden of the palace, and made bold to accost her. Thinking, as he said, "to test her affection to Lord Leicester by another means," the artful Sir Thomas stepped up to her, and observed that his Lordship was seriously ill. "It is feared," he said, "that the Earl is again attacked by the disease of which Dr. Goodrowse did once cure him. Wherefore his Lordship is now a humble suitor to your Highness that it would please you to spare Goodrowse, and give him leave to go thither for some time."

The Queen was instantly touched.

"Certainly—with all my heart, with all my heart, he shall have him," she replied, "and sorry I am that his Lordship hath that need of him."

"And indeed," returned sly Sir Thomas, "your Highness is a very gracious prince, who are pleased not to suffer his Lordship to perish in health, though otherwise you remain deeply offended with him."

"You know my mind," returned Elizabeth, now all the queen again, and perhaps suspecting the trick; "I may not endure that any man should alter my commission and the authority that I gave him, upon his own fancies and without me."

With this she instantly summoned one of her gentlemen, in order to break off the interview, fearing that Shirley was about to enter again upon a discussion of the whole subject, and again to attempt the delivery of the Earl's letter.¹

In all this there was much of superannuated coquetry, no doubt, and much of Tudor despotism, but there was also a strong infusion of artifice. For it will soon be necessary to

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 175, 176, same date.

direct attention to certain secret transactions of an important nature in which the Queen was engaged, and which were even hidden from the all-seeing eye of Walsingham—although shrewdly suspected both by that statesman and by Leicester—but which were most influential in modifying her policy at that moment towards the Netherlands.

There could be no doubt, however, of the stanch and strenuous manner in which the delinquent Earl was supported by his confidential messengers and by some of his fellow-councillors. His true friends were urgent that the great cause in which he was engaged should be forwarded sincerely and without delay. Shirley had been sent for money; but to draw money from Elizabeth was like coining her life-blood, drachma by drachma.

"Your Lordship is like to have but a poor supply of money at this time," said Sir Thomas. "To be plain with you, I fear she groweth weary of the charge, and will hardly be brought to deal thoroughly in the action."

He was also more explicit than he might have been—had he been better informed as to the disposition of the chief personages of the court, concerning whose temper the absent Earl was naturally anxious. Hatton was most in favour at the moment, and it was through Hatton that the communications upon Netherland matters passed; "for," said Shirley, "she will hardly endure Mr. Secretary (Walsingham) to speak unto her therein."

"And truly, my Lord," he continued, "as Mr. Secretary is a noble, good, and true friend unto you, so doth Mr. Vice-Chamberlain show himself an honourable, true, and faithful gentleman, and doth carefully and most like a good friend for your Lordship."

And thus very succinctly and graphically had the envoy painted the situation to his principal. "Your Lordship now sees things just as they stand," he moralized. "Your Lordship is exceeding wise. *You know the Queen and her nature best of any man.* You know all men here. Your Lordship can judge the sequel by this that you see: only this I must tell

your Lordship, I perceive that fears and doubts from thence are like to work better effects here than comforts and assurance. I think it my part to send your Lordship this as it is, rather than to be silent."¹

And with these rather ominous insinuations the envoy concluded for the time his narrative.

While these storms were blowing and "overblowing" in England, Leicester remained greatly embarrassed and anxious in Holland. He had sown the wind more extensively than he had dreamed of when accepting the government, and he was now awaiting, with much trepidation, the usual harvest. And we have seen that it was rapidly ripening. Meantime, the good which he had really effected in the Provinces by the course he had taken was likely to be neutralized by the sinister rumours as to his impending disgrace, while the enemy was proportionally encouraged. "I understand credibly," he said, "that the Prince of Parma feels himself in great jollity that her Majesty doth rather mislike than allow of our doings here, which, if it be true, let her be sure her own sweet self shall first smart."²

Moreover, the English troops were, as we have seen, mere shoeless, shivering, starving vagabonds. The Earl had generously advanced very large sums of money from his own pocket to relieve their necessity. The States, on the other hand, had voluntarily increased the monthly contribution of 200,000 florins, to which their contract with Elizabeth obliged them,³ and were more disposed than ever they had been since the

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' just cited.

² Bruce, 148, ³/₁₃ March, 1586.

³ "They have, I say, added," wrote Lord North to Lord Burghley, "to their first offer as much more, which amounteth to at least forty thousand pounds a month." 28 Feb. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

But he seems to have much overstated the amount. The regular contribution of the States was twenty thousand pounds (or 200,000 florins, as it was then always reckoned) a

month, and they had recently granted, at Leicester's urgent request, an additional sum of forty thousand pounds (400,000 florins) for four months, making thirty thousand pounds a month. It is however quite impossible to ascertain at this day the exact sums voted or collected in the republic for war-expenses, although there is no doubt that their efforts were enormous. Comp. Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 135, 24 Feb. 1586.
6 Mar.

death of Orange to proceed vigorously and harmoniously against the common enemy of Christendom. Under such circumstances it may well be imagined that there was cause on Leicester's part for deep mortification at the tragical turn which the Queen's temper seemed to be taking.

"I know not," he said, "how her Majesty doth mean to dispose of me. It hath grieved me more than I can express that for faithful and good service she should so deeply conceive against me. God knows with what mind I have served her Highness, and perhaps some others might have failed. Yet she is neither tied one jot by covenant or promise by me in any way, nor at one groat the more charges, but myself two or three thousand pounds sterling more than now is like to be well spent. I will desire no partial speech in my favour. If my doings be ill for her Majesty and the realm, let me feel the smart of it. The cause is now well forward; let not her majesty suffer it to quail. If you will have it proceed to good effect, send away Sir William Pelham with all the haste you can. I mean not to complain, but with so weighty a cause as this is, few men have been so weakly assisted. Her Majesty hath far better choice for my place, and with any that may succeed me let Sir William Pelham be first that may come. I speak from my soul for her Majesty's service. I am for myself upon an hour's warning to obey her good pleasure."¹

Thus far the Earl had maintained his dignity. He had yielded to the solicitations of the States, and had thereby exceeded his commission, and gratified his ambition, but he had in no wise forfeited his self-respect.

But—so soon as the first unquestionable intelligence of the passion to which the Queen had given way at his misdoings reached him—he began to whimper. The straightforward tone which Davison had adopted in his interviews with Elizabeth, and the firmness with which he had defended the cause of his

¹ Leicester to Burghley, 18 Feb. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

absent friend, at a moment when he had plunged himself into disgrace, was worthy of applause. He deserved at least a word of honest thanks.

Ignoble however was the demeanor of the Earl towards the man—for whom he had but recently been unable to invent eulogies sufficiently warm—so soon as he conceived the possibility of sacrificing his friend as the scape-goat for his own fault. An honest schoolboy would have scorned to leave thus in the lurch a comrade who had been fighting his battles so honestly.

"How earnest I was," he wrote to the lords of the council, 9th March, 1586, "not only to acquaint her Majesty, but immediately upon the first motion made by the States, to send Mr. Davison over to her with letters, I doubt not but he will truly affirm for me; yea, and how far against my will it was, notwithstanding any reasons delivered me, that he and others persisted in, to have me accept first of this place. . . . The extremity of the case, and my being persuaded that Mr. Davison might have better satisfied her Majesty, *than I perceive he can*, caused me—neither arrogantly nor contemptuously, but even merely and faithfully—to do her Majesty the best service."¹

He acknowledged, certainly, that Davison had been influenced by honest motives, although his importunities had been the real cause of the Earl's neglect of his own obligations. But he protested that he had himself only erred through an excessive pliancy to the will of others. "My yielding was my own fault," he admitted, "whatsoever his persuasions; but far from a contemptuous heart, or else God pluck out both heart and bowels with utter shame."²

So soon as Sir Thomas Heneage had presented himself, and revealed the full extent of the Queen's wrath, the Earl's disposition to cast the whole crime on the shoulders of Davison became quite undisguised.

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.', 162, $\frac{9}{19}$ March, 1586.

² Ibid. 163, same date.

"I thank you for your letters," wrote Leicester to Walsingham, "though you can send me no comfort. Her Majesty doth deal hardly to believe so ill of me. It is true I faulted, . . . but she doth not consider what commodities she hath withal, and herself no way engaged for it, as Mr. Davison might have better declared it, if it had pleased him. And I must thank him only for my blame, and so he will confess to you, for, I protest before God, no necessity here could have made me leave her Majesty unacquainted with the cause before I would have accepted of it, *but only his so earnest pressing me with his faithful assured promise to discharge me, however her Majesty should take it.* For you all see there she had no other cause to be offended but this, and, *by the Lord,* he was the only cause; albeit it is no sufficient allegation, being as I am. . . . He had, I think, saved all to have told her, as he promised me. *But now it is laid upon me,* God send the cause to take no harm, my grief must be the less. . . . How far Mr. Heneage's commission shall deface me I know not. He is wary to observe his commission, and I consent withal. I know the time will be her Majesty will be sorry for it. In the meantime I am too, too weary of the high dignity. I would that any that could serve her Majesty were placed in it, and I to sit down with all my losses."²

In more manful strain he then alluded to the sufferings of his army. "Whatsoever become of me," he said, "give me leave to speak for the poor soldiers. If they be not better maintained, being in this strange country, there will be neither good service done, nor be without great dishonour to her Majesty. . . . Well, you see the wants, and it is one cause that will glad me to be rid of this heavy high calling, and wish *me at my poor cottage again,* if any I shall find. But let her Majesty pay them well, and appoint such a man as Sir William Pelham to govern them, and she never wan more honour than these men here will do, I am persuaded."²

That the Earl was warmly urged by all most conversant

² Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 165-167, ⁹/₁₀ March, 1586.

² Ibid.

with Netherland politics to assume the government was a fact admitted by all. That he manifested rather eagerness than reluctance on the subject, and that his only hesitation arose from the proposed restraints upon the power, not from scruples about accepting the power, are facts upon record. There is nothing save his own assertion to show any backwardness on his part to snatch the coveted prize; and that assertion was flatly denied by Davison, and was indeed refuted by every circumstance in the case. It is certain that he had concealed from Davison the previous prohibitions of the Queen. He could anticipate much better than could Davison, therefore, the probable indignation of the Queen. It is strange then that he should have shut his eyes to it so wilfully, and stranger still that he should have relied on the envoy's eloquence instead of his own to mitigate that emotion. Had he placed his defence simply upon its true basis, the necessity of the case, and the impossibility of carrying out the Queen's intentions in any other way, it would be difficult to censure him; but that he should seek to screen himself by laying the whole blame on a subordinate, was enough to make any honest man who heard him hang his head. "I meant not to do it, but Davison told me to do it, please your Majesty, and if there was naughtiness in it, he said he would make it all right with your Majesty." Such, reduced to its simplest expression, was the defence of the magnificent Earl of Leicester.

And as he had gone cringing and whining to his royal mistress, so it was natural that he should be brutal and blustering to his friend.

"By your means," said he,¹ "I have fallen into her Majesty's deep displeasure. . . . If you had delivered to her the truth of my dealing, her Highness never could have conceived, as I perceive she doth. . . . Nor doth her Majesty know *how hardly*² I was drawn to accept this place before I had acquainted her—as to which you promised you would not

¹ Leicester to Davison, with his comments in reply written in the margin. Bruce, 168-171, ¹⁰/₃₀ March, 1586.

² The words italicized in the text were underscored by Davison, with the marginal comment—"Let Sir Philip Sidney and others witness."

only give her full satisfaction, but would procure me great thanks. . . . You did chiefly persuade me to take this charge upon me. . . . You can remember how many treaties you and others had with the States, before I agreed, for all *yours and their persuasion to take it*.¹ . . . You gave me assurance to satisfy her Majesty, but I see not that you have done anything . . . I did not hide from you the doubt I had of her Majesty's ill taking it. . . . *You chiefly brought me into it*,² . . . and it could no way have been heavy to you, though you had told the uttermost of your own doing, as you faithfully promised you would. . . . *I did very unwillingly come into the matter*,³ doubting that to fall out which is come to pass, . . . and it doth so *fall out by your negligent carelessness, whereof I many hundred times told you that you would*⁴ both mar the goodness of the matter, and breed ~~me~~ her Majesty's displeasure. . . . Thus fare you well, and except your embassages have better success, I shall have no cause to commend them."

And so was the unfortunate Davison ground into finest dust between the upper and lower millstones of royal wrath and loyal subserviency.

Meantime the other special envoy had made his appearance in the Netherlands; the other go-between between the incensed Queen and the backsliding favourite. It has already been made sufficiently obvious, by the sketch given of his instructions, that his mission was a delicate one. In obedience to those instructions, Heneage accordingly made his appearance before the council, and, in Leicester's presence, delivered to them the severe and biting reprimand which Elizabeth had chosen to inflict upon the States and upon the governor. The envoy performed his ungracious task as daintily as he could, and after preliminary consultation with Leicester; but the proud Earl was deeply mortified. "The fourteenth day

¹ "All this while there was no note of any contrary commandment"—Comment of Davison.

² "Absolutely denied."—Comment of Davison.

³ "Hereof let the world judge."—Davison.

⁴ Words underscored by Davison,

with the comment—"You might doubt it, but if you had uttered so much, you should have employed some other in the journey, which I had no reason to affect much, preseeing well enough how thankless it would be." Bruce, 170.

of this month of March," said he, "Sir Thomas Heneage delivered a very sharp letter from her Majesty to the council of estate, besides his message—myself being present, for so was her Majesty's pleasure, as he said, and I do think he did but as he was commanded. How great a grief it must be to an honest heart and a true, faithful servant, before his own face, to a company of very wise and grave counsellors, who had conceived a marvellous opinion before of my credit with her Majesty, to be charged now with a manifest and wilful contempt! Matter enough to have broken any man's heart, that looked rather for thanks, as God doth know I did when I first heard of Mr. Heneage's arrival—I must say to your Lordship, for discharge of my duty, I can be no fit man to serve here—my disgrace is too great—protesting to you that since that day I cannot find it in my heart to come into that place, where, by my own sufferings torn, I was made to be thought so lewd a person."¹

He then comforted himself—as he had a right to do—with the reflection that this disgrace inflicted was more than he deserved, and that such would be the opinion of those by whom he was surrounded.

"Albeit one thing," he said, "did greatly comfort me, that they all best knew the wrong was great I had, and that her Majesty was very wrongfully informed of the state of my cause. I doubt not but they can and will discharge me, howsoever they shall satisfy her Majesty. And as I would rather wish for death than justly to deserve her displeasure, so, good my Lord, this disgrace not coming for any ill service to her, pray procure me a speedy resolution, that I may go hide me and pray for her. My heart is broken, though thus far I can quiet myself, that I know I have done her Majesty as faithful and good service in these countries as ever she had done her since she was Queen of England. . . . Under correction, my good Lord, I have had Halifax law—to be condemned first and inquired upon after. I pray God that no man find this measure that I have done, and deserved no worse."²

¹ Leicester to Burghley, 17 March, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Ibid.

He defended himself—as Davison had already defended him—upon the necessities of the case.

“I, a poor gentleman,” he said, “who have wholly depended upon herself alone—and now, being commanded to a service of the greatest importance that ever her Majesty employed any servant in, and finding the occasion so serving me, and the necessity of time such as would not permit such delays, flatly seeing that if that opportunity were lost, the like again for her service and the good of the realm was never to be looked for, presuming upon the favour of my prince, as many servants have done, exceeding somewhat thereupon, rather than breaking any part of my commission, taking upon me a place whereby I found these whole countries could be held at her best devotion, without binding her Majesty to any such matter as she had forbidden to the States before—finding, I say, both the time and opportunity to serve, and no lack but to trust to her gracious acceptation, I now feel that how good, how honourable, how profitable soever it be, it is turned to a worse part than if I had broken all her commissions and commandments, to the greatest harm, and dishonour, and danger, that may be imagined against her person, state, and dignity.”¹

He protested, not without a show of reason, that he was like to be worse punished “for well-doing than any man that had committed a most heinous or traitorous offence,” and he maintained that if he had not accepted the government, as he had done, “the whole State had been gone and wholly lost.”² All this—as we have seen—had already been stoutly urged by Davison, in the very face of the tempest, but with no result, except to gain the enmity of both parties to the quarrel. The ungrateful Leicester now expressed confidence that the second go-between would be more adroit than the first had proved. “The causes why,” said he, “Mr. Davison could have told—no man better—but Mr. Heneage can now tell, who hath sought to the uttermost the bottom of all things. I will stand to his report, whether glory or vain desire of title

¹ Leicester to Burghley. (MS. last cited.)

² *Ibid.*

caused me to step one foot forward in the matter. My place was great enough and high enough before, with much less trouble than by this, besides the great indignation of her Majesty. . . . If I had overslipt the good occasion then in danger, I had been worthy to be hanged, and to be taken for a most lewd servant to her Majesty, and a dishonest wretch to my country."¹

But diligently as Heneage had sought to the bottom of all things, he had not gained the approbation of Sidney. Sir Philip thought that the new man had only ill botched a piece of work that had been most awkwardly contrived from the beginning. "Sir Thomas Heneage," said he, "hath with as much honesty, in my opinion done as much hurt as any man this twelvemonth hath done with naughtiness. But I hope in God, when her Majesty finds the truth of things, her graciousness will not utterly overthrow a cause so behooveful and costly unto her."²

He briefly warned the government that most disastrous effects were likely to ensue, if the Earl should be publicly disgraced, and the recent action of the States reversed. The penny-wise economy, too, of the Queen, was rapidly proving a most ruinous extravagance. "I only cry for Flushing," said Sidney, "but, unless the monies be sent over, there will some terrible accident follow, particularly to the cautionary towns, if her Majesty mean to have them cautions."³

The effect produced by the first explosion of the Queen's wrath was indeed one of universal suspicion and distrust. The greatest care had been taken, however, that the affair should be delicately handled, for Heneage, while doing as much hurt by honesty as others by naughtiness, had modified his course as much as he dared in deference to the opinions of the Earl himself, and that of his English counsellors. The great culprit himself, assisted by his two lawyers, Clerk and Killigrew—had himself drawn the bill of his own indictment. The letters of the Queen to the States, to the council,

¹ Leicester to Burghley. (MS. just cited.)

² Sir P. Sidney to Burghley, 18 March, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Ibid.

and to the Earl himself, were, of necessity, delivered, but the reprimand which Heneage had been instructed to fulminate was made as harmless as possible. It was arranged that he should make a speech before the council, but abstain from a protocol. The oration was duly pronounced, and it was, of necessity, stinging. Otherwise the disobedience to the Queen would have been flagrant. But the pain inflicted was to disappear with the first castigation. The humiliation was to be public and solemn, but it was not to be placed on perpetual record.

"We thought best," said Leicester, Heneage, Clerk, and Killigrew—"according to her Majesty's secret instructions—to take that course which might least endanger the weak estate of the Provinces—that is to say, to utter so much in words as we hoped might satisfy her excellent Majesty's expectation, and yet leave them nothing in writing to confirm that which was secretly spread in many places to the hindrance of the good course of settling these affairs. Which speech, after Sir Thomas Heneage had devised, and we both perused and allowed, he, by our consent and advice, pronounced to the council of state. This we did think needful—especially because every one of the council that was present at the reading of her Majesty's first letters, was of the full mind, that if her Majesty should again show the least mislike of the present government, or should not by her next letters confirm it, they were all undone—for *that every man would cast with himself which way to make his peace.*"¹

Thus adroitly had the "poor gentleman, who could not find it in his heart to come again into the place, where—by his own sufferings torn—he was made to appear so lewd a person"—provided that there should remain no trace of that lewdness and of his sovereign's displeasure, upon the record of the States.² It was not long, too, before the Earl was enabled to surmount his mortification ; but the end was not yet.

¹ "The Resolution of my Lord, &c., for the speech I should use to the Council of the States upon the letters written from H. Majesty in March,

14 March, 1586." Signed by Leicester, Heneage, Clerk, and Killigrew. (S. P. Office MS.)

² In the foreign correspondence, or

The universal suspicion, consequent on these proceedings, grew most painful. It pointed to one invariable quarter. It was believed by all that the Queen was privately treating for peace, and that the transaction was kept a secret not only from the States but from her own most trusted counsellors also. It would be difficult to exaggerate the pernicious effects of this suspicion. Whether it was a well-grounded one or not, will be shown in a subsequent chapter, but there is no doubt that the vigour of the enterprise was thus sapped at a most critical moment. The Provinces had never been more heartily banded together since the fatal 10th of July, 1584, than they were in the early spring of 1586. They were rapidly organizing their own army, and, if the Queen had manifested more sympathy with her own starving troops,¹ the

"despatch books," between the States General and England, there are no letters either from Queen Elizabeth, or from Ortell, who was in England during the whole of the year 1586, as agent of Holland and Zeeland, and, at the close of the year, was added to the number of commissioners sent by the States General to the Queen. Nor are there any letters addressed to Elizabeth or to Ortell, although there are a few notes (which I have used) made by the persons to whom was entrusted the task of drawing up letters to be sent by Davison in the middle of February, 1586, and afterwards. There are, indeed, no letters of 1586 relative to England or to the Leicester government, to be found in the archives of the Hague; nor is there in the daily register of the sessions of the States General for 1586—which I have examined, page by page, very carefully—a trace of the dissatisfaction of the Queen, or of the angry correspondence which ensued, after the acceptance by Leicester of the "absolute" government. All the pieces have been lost—probably secreted at the period—so that no one could tell at present, by consulting the Hague Archives only, that there had been a quarrel. Bor, Meteren, and other contemporaries, give an account of the trans-

action, in the main correct, although most of them are of opinion that the Queen's anger was mere pretence, and that she was desirous of assuming the sovereignty, in case the Provinces were deemed by Leicester capable of maintaining their own cause. This view as we have seen, was quite erroneous.

It is remarkable that between 23 Feb. and 11 April, 1586, the States General were not in session.

¹ "I will not trouble your Lordship," wrote Leicester to Burghley on the 15 March, 1586, "with any thing that may privately concern myself. I see what the acceptance of my services is, and how little it availeth to allege most just reasons in defence of them. But though I see I am, and must be, disgraced, which God I hope will give me strength to bear patiently, yet let me entreat your L^y to be a mean to her M. that the poor soldiers be not beaten for my sake. There came no penny of treasure over since my coming hither. That which then came was most part due before it came. There is much due to them. They cannot get a penny. Their credit is spent. They perish for want of victual and clothing in great numbers. The whole and some are ready to mutiny," &c. S. P. Office MS.

united Englishmen and Hollanders would have been invincible even by Alexander Farnese.

Moreover, they had sent out nine war-vessels to cruise off the Cape Verd Islands for the homeward-bound Spanish treasure-fleet from America, with orders, if they missed it, to proceed to the West Indies; so that, said Leicester, "the King of Spain will have enough to do between these men and Drake."¹ All parties had united in conferring a generous amount of power upon the Earl, who was, in truth, stadholder-general, under grant from the States—and both Leicester and the Provinces themselves were eager and earnest for the war. In war alone lay the salvation of England and Holland. Peace was an impossibility. It seemed to the most experienced statesmen of both countries even an absurdity. It may well be imagined, therefore, that the idea of an underhand negotiation by Elizabeth would cause a frenzy in the Netherlands. In Leicester's opinion, nothing short of a general massacre of the English would be the probable consequence. "No doubt," said he, "the very way it is to put us all to the sword here. For mine own part it would be happiest for me, though I wish and trust to lose my life in better sort."²

Champagny, however, was giving out mysterious hints that the King of Spain could have peace with England when he wished for it. Sir Thomas Cecil, son of Lord Burghley, on whose countenance the States especially relied, was returning on sick-leave from his government of the Brill, and this sudden departure of so eminent a personage, joined with the public disavowal of the recent transaction between Leicester and the Provinces, was producing a general and most sickening apprehension as to the Queen's good faith. The Earl did not fail to urge these matters most warmly on the consideration of the English council, setting forth that the States were staunch for the war, but that they would be beforehand with her if she attempted by underhand means to compass a peace. "If these men once smell any such matter," wrote

¹ Leicester to Burghley, 17 March, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² *Ibid.*

Leicester to Burghley, "be you sure they will soon come before you, to the utter overthrow of her Majesty and state for ever."¹

The Earl was suspecting the "false boys," by whom he was surrounded, although it was impossible for him to perceive, as we have been enabled to do, the wide-spread and intricate meshes by which he was enveloped. "Your Papists in England," said he, "have sent over word to some in this company, that all that they ever hoped for is come to pass; that my Lord of Leicester shall be called away in greatest indignation with her Majesty, and to confirm this of Champagny, I have myself seen a letter that her Majesty is in hand with a secret peace. God forbid! for if it be so, her Majesty, her realm, and we, are all undone."²

The feeling in the Provinces was still sincerely loyal towards England. "These men," said Leicester, "yet honour and most dearly love her Majesty, and hardly, I know, will be brought to believe ill of her any way." Nevertheless these rumours, to the discredit of her good faith, were doing infinite harm; while the Earl, although keeping his eyes and ears wide open, was anxious not to compromise himself any further with his sovereign, by appearing himself to suspect her of duplicity. "Good, my Lord," he besought Burghley, "do not let her Majesty know of this concerning Champagny as coming from me, for she will think it is done for my own cause, which, by the Lord God, it is not, but even on the necessity of the case for her own safety, and the realm, and us all. Good my Lord, as you will do any good in the matter, let not her Majesty understand any piece of it to come from me."³

The States-General, on the 25th March, N. S., addressed a respectful letter to the Queen, in reply to her vehement chidings. They expressed their deep regret that her Majesty should be so offended with the election of the Earl of Leicester as absolute governor. They confessed that she had just cause of dis-

¹⁵ March,
²⁵ 1586.

¹ Leicester to Burghley, MS. last cited.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

pleasure, but hoped that when she should be informed of the whole matter she would rest better satisfied with their proceedings. They stated that the authority was the same which had been previously bestowed upon governors-general; observing that by the word "absolute," which had been used in designation of that authority, nothing more had been intended than to give to the Earl full power to execute his commission, while the *sovereignty of the country was reserved to the people*. This commission, they said, could not be without danger revoked. And therefore they most humbly besought her Majesty to approve what had been done, and to remember its conformity with her own advice to them, that a multitude of heads, whereby confusion in the government is bred, should be avoided.¹

Leicester, upon the same occasion, addressed a letter to Burghley and Walsingham, expressing himself as became a crushed and contrite man, never more to raise his drooping head again, but warmly and manfully urging upon the attention of the English government—for the honour and interest of the Queen herself—"the miserable state of the poor soldiers." The necessity of immediate remittances in order to keep them from starving, was most imperious. For himself, he was smothering his wretchedness until he should learn her Majesty's final decision, as to what was to become of him. "Meantime," said he, "I carry my grief inward, and

¹ The letter is given in Meteren, xii. 234. Wagenaar (viii. 121, note 4) observes, very correctly, that, when the States were thus glibly explaining away the word "absolute," they had either not read over very carefully the commission granted by themselves to Leicester, or trusted that the Queen would not closely examine that document. In this original contract with the Earl were these words: "Item, his Excellency shall have full authority and absolute power (volle macht en absoluut geweld) within the Provinces in the matter of policy and justice (in 't stuck van de politie en justitie)." Comp. Bor, II. 686. Groot Plakaat Boek, iv. 81. Meteren, *ubi sup.*

Bor, Meteren, and many contemporary writers, as well as Wagenaar and other more modern authorities, are quite mistaken in representing the whole angry demonstration made by the Queen in regard to this acceptance by Leicester of the "absolute" government as a farce, and a farce which had been previously arranged. We have seen from the private letters of the period how very genuine was the ill humour of Elizabeth.

The state-council also, on the 27 March, 1586 (N.S.), addressed a letter to the Queen, of similar tenor to that written by the States-General. Printed in Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' Append. 468, 469.

will proceed till her Majesty's full pleasure come with as little discouragement to the cause as I can. I pray God her Majesty may do that may be best for herself. For my own part my heart is broken, but not by the enemy."¹

There is no doubt that the public disgrace thus inflicted upon the broken-hearted governor, and the severe censure administered to the States by the Queen were both ill-timed and undeserved. Whatever his disingenuousness towards Davison, whatever his disobedience to Elizabeth, however ambitious his own secret motives may have been, there is no doubt at all that thus far he had borne himself well in his great office.

Richard Cavendish—than whom few had better opportunities of judging—spoke in strong language on the subject. "It is a thing almost incredible," said he, "that the care and diligence of any one man living could, in so small time, have so much repaired so disjointed and loose an estate as my Lord found this country in. But lest he should swell in pride of that his good success, your Lordship knoweth that God hath so tempered the cause with the construction thereof, as may well hold him in good consideration of human things."² He alluded with bitterness—as did all men in the Netherlands who were not open or disguised Papists—to the fatal rumours concerning the peace-negotiation in connection with the recall of Leicester. "There be here advertisements of most fearful instance," he said, "namely, that Champagny doth not spare most liberally to bruit abroad that he hath in his hands the conditions of peace offered by her Majesty unto the King his master, and that it is in his power to conclude at pleasure—which fearful and mischievous plot, if in time it be not met withal by some notable encounter, it cannot but prove the root of great ruin."³

The "false boys" about Leicester were indefatigable in spreading these rumours, and in taking advantage—with the

¹ Leicester to Burghley and Walsingham, 15 March, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Cavendish to Burghley, 18 March, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Ibid.

assistance of the Papists in the obedient Provinces and in England—of the disgraced condition in which the Queen had placed the favourite. Most galling to the haughty Earl—most damaging to the cause of England, Holland, and liberty—were the tales to his discredit, which circulated on the Bourse at Antwerp, Middelburg, Amsterdam, and in all the other commercial centres. The most influential bankers and merchants were assured by a thousand chattering—but as it were invisible—tongues, that the Queen had for a long time disliked Leicester; that he was a man of no account among the statesmen of England; that he was a beggar and a bankrupt; that, if he had waited two months longer, he would have made his appearance in the Provinces with one man and one boy for his followers; that the Queen had sent him thither to be rid of him; that she never intended him to have more authority than Sir John Norris had; that she could not abide the bestowing the title of Excellency upon him, and that she had not disguised her fury at his elevation to the post of governor-general.¹

All who attempted a refutation of these statements were asked, with a sneer, whether her Majesty had ever written a line to him, or in commendation of him, since his arrival. Minute inquiries were made by the Dutch merchants of their commercial correspondents, both in their own country and in England, as to Leicester's real condition and character at home. What was his rank, they asked, what his ability, what his influence at court? Why, if he were really of so high quality as had been reported, was he thus neglected, and at last disgraced? Had he any landed property in England? Had he really ever held any other office but that of master of the horse? "And then," asked one particular busy body, who made himself very unpleasant on the Amsterdam Exchange, "why has her Majesty forbidden all noblemen and gentlemen from coming hither, as was the case at the beginning? Is it because she is hearkening to a peace? And if it

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 214-219, $\frac{5}{15}$ April, 1586.

be so, quoth he, we are well handled ; for if her Majesty hath sent a disgraced man to amuse us, while she is secretly working a peace for herself, when we—on the contrary—had broken off all our negotiations, upon confidence of her Majesty's goodness ; such conduct will be remembered to the end of the world, and the Hollanders will never abide the name of England again."¹

On such a bed of nettles there was small chance of repose for the governor. Some of the rumours were even more stinging. So incomprehensible did it seem that the proud sovereign of England should send over her subjects to starve or beg in the streets of Flushing and Ostend, that it was darkly intimated that Leicester had embezzled the funds, which, no doubt, had been remitted for the poor soldiers.² This was the most cruel blow of all. The Earl had been put to enormous charges. His household at the Hague cost him a thousand pounds a month. He had been paying and furnishing five hundred and fifty men out of his own purse. He had also a choice regiment of cavalry, numbering seven hundred and fifty horse, three hundred and fifty of which number were over and above those allowed for by the Queen, and were entirely at his expense. He was most liberal in making presents of money to every gentleman in his employment. He had deeply mortgaged his estates in order to provide for these heavy demands upon him, and professed his willingness "to spend more, if he might have got any more money for his land that was left ;" and in the face of such unquestionable facts—much to the credit certainly of his generosity—he was accused of swindling a Queen whom neither Jew nor Gentile had ever yet been sharp enough to swindle ; while he was in reality plunging forward in a course of reckless extravagance in order to obviate the fatal effects of her penuriousness.

Yet these sinister reports were beginning to have a poisonous effect. Already an alteration of mien was perceptible in

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.,' last cited. ² 'Leyc. Corresp.' 216, ⁵/₁₅ April, 1586.

³ Ibid. 214-219.

the States-General. "Some buzzing there is amongst them," said Leicester, "whatsoever it be. They begin to deal very strangely within these few days."¹ Moreover the industry of the Poleys, Blunts, and Pagets, had turned these unfavourable circumstances to such good account that a mutiny had been near breaking out among the English troops. "And, before the Lord I speak it," said the Earl, "I am sure some of these good towns had been gone ere this, but for my money. As for the States, I warrant you, they see day at a little hole. God doth know what a forward and a joyful country here was within a month. God send her Majesty to recover it so again, and to take care of it, on the condition she send me after Sir Francis Drake to the Indies, my service here being no more acceptable."²

Such was the aspect of affairs in the Provinces after the first explosion of the Queen's anger had become known. Meanwhile the court-weather was very changeable in England, being sometimes serene, sometimes cloudy, always treacherous. Mr. Vavasour, sent by the Earl with despatches to her Majesty and the council, had met with a sufficiently benignant reception. She accepted the letters, which, however, owing to a bad cold with a defluxion in the eyes, she was unable at once to read; but she talked ambiguously with the messenger. Vavasour took pains to show the immediate necessity of sending supplies, so that the armies in the Netherlands might take the field at the earliest possible moment. "And what," said she, "if a peace should come in the mean time?"³

"If your Majesty desireth a convenient peace," replied Vavasour, "to take the field is the readiest way to obtain it; for as yet the King of Spain hath had no reason to fear you. He is daily expecting that your own slackness may give your Majesty an overthrow. Moreover, the Spaniards are soldiers, and are not to be moved by shadows."⁴

¹ 'Leyc. Corresp.' last cited.

² Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 194, 195, ^{31 March}_{10 April}, 1586.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

But the Queen had no ears for these remonstrances, and no disposition to open her coffers. A warrant for twenty-four thousand pounds¹ had been signed by her at the end of the month of March, and was about to be sent, when Vavasour arrived ; but it was not possible for him, although assisted by the eloquence of Walsingham and Burghley, to obtain an enlargement of the pittance. "The storms are overblown," said Walsingham, "but I fear your Lordship shall receive very scarce measure from hence. You will not believe how the sparing humour doth increase upon us."²

Nor were the storms so thoroughly overblown but that there were not daily indications of returning foul weather. Accordingly—after a conference with Vavasour—Burghley, and Walsingham had an interview with the Queen, in which the Lord Treasurer used bold and strong language. He protested to her that he was bound, both by his duty to himself and his oath as her councillor, to declare that the course she was holding to Lord Leicester was most dangerous to her own honour, interest and safety. If she intended to continue in this line of conduct, he begged to resign his office of Lord Treasurer ; wishing, before God and man, to wash his hands of the shame and peril which he saw could not be avoided. The Queen, astonished at the audacity of Burghley's attitude and language, hardly knew whether to chide him for his presumption or to listen to his arguments. She did both. She taxed him with insolence in daring to address her so roundly, and then finding he was speaking even *in amaritudine animæ* and out of a clear conscience, she became calm again, and intimated a disposition to qualify her anger against the absent Earl.³

Next day, to their sorrow, the two councillors found that the Queen had again changed her mind—"as one that had

¹ This sum added to the 52,000*l.* already advanced, made 76,000*l.* in all, "which," said Burghley, "her Majesty doth often repeat with great offence." 'Leya. Corresp.' 199, ²¹ March 1586.
¹⁰ April

² Bruce's 'Leya. Corres.' 191, ²⁸ March, 1586.
⁷ April

³ Ibid. 197, ²¹ March 1586.
¹⁰ April

been by some adverse counsel seduced." She expressed the opinion that affairs would do well enough in the Netherlands, even though Leicester were displaced. A conference followed between Walsingham, Hatton, and Burghley, and then the three went again to her Majesty. They assured her that if she did not take immediate steps to satisfy the States' and the people of the Provinces, she would lose those countries and her own honour at the same time; and that then they would prove a source of danger to her instead of protection and glory. At this she was greatly troubled, and agreed to do anything they might advise consistently with her honour. It was then agreed that Leicester should be continued in the government which he had accepted until the matter should be further considered, and letters to that effect were at once written. Then came a messenger from Sir Thomas Heneage, bringing despatches from that envoy, and a second and most secret one from the Earl himself. Burghley took the precious letter which the favourite had addressed to his royal mistress, and had occasion to observe its magical effect.² Walsingham and the Lord Treasurer had been right in so earnestly remonstrating with him on his previous silence.

"She read your letter," said Burghley, "and, in very truth, I found her princely heart touched with favourable interpretation of your actions; affirming them to be only offensive to her, *in that she was not made privy to them; not now misliking that you had the authority.*"³

Such, at fifty-three, was Elizabeth Tudor. A gentle whisper of idolatry from the lips of the man she loved, and she was wax in his hands. Where now were the vehement

¹ Bruce, 'Leyc. Corresp.' 198, last cited.

² This letter was probably very tender and personal, for no trace of it is to be found in the English archives.

³ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 198, 199, 31 March, 1586; and, three weeks later, 10 April, after the news of the success of the Earl before Grave (to be described in VOL. I.—16

a subsequent chapter) had reached England, Walsingham observed to Leicester, "I do assure your Lordship I think her Majesty took as much joy upon the view of your letter, in seeing you restored to your former comfort, grounded upon her favour, as she did in the overthrow of the enemy." Ibid. 230, 21 April, 1586.
1 May

protestations of horror that her public declaration of principles and motives had been set at naught? Where now were her vociferous denunciations of the States, her shrill invectives against Leicester, her big oaths, and all the *hysterica passio*, which had sent poor Lord Burghley to bed with the gout, and inspired the soul of Walsingham with dismal forebodings? Her anger had dissolved into a shower of tenderness, and if her parsimony still remained it was because that could only vanish when she too should cease to be.

And thus, for a moment, the grave diplomatic difference between the crown of England and their high mightinesses the United States—upon the solution of which the fate of Christendom was hanging—seemed to shrink to the dimensions of a lovers' quarrel. Was it not strange that the letter had been so long delayed?

Davison had exhausted argument in defence of the acceptance by the Earl of the authority conferred by the States, and had gained nothing by his eloquence, save abuse from the Queen, and acrimonious censure from the Earl. He had deeply offended both by pleading the cause of the erring favourite, when the favourite should have spoken for himself. 'Poor Mr. Davison,' said Walsingham, "doth take it very grievously that your Lordship should conceive so hardly of him as you do. I find the conceit of your Lordship's disfavour hath greatly dejected him. But at such time as he arrived her Majesty was so incensed, as all the arguments and orators in the world could not have wrought any satisfaction."¹

But now a little *billet-doux* had done what all the orators in the world could not do. The arguments remained the same, but the Queen no longer "misliked that Leicester should have the authority." It was natural that the Lord Treasurer should express his satisfaction at this auspicious result.

"I did commend her princely nature," he said, "in allowing your good intention, and excusing you of any spot of evil

¹ Bruce, 'Leyb. Corresp.' 206, $\frac{1}{10}$ April, 1580.

meaning ; and I thought good to hasten her resolution, which you must now take to come from a favourable good mistress. You must strive with your nature to throw over your shoulder that which is past.”¹

Sir Walter Raleigh, too, who had been “falsely and pestilently” represented to the Earl as an enemy, rather than what he really was, a most ardent favourer of the Netherland cause, wrote at once to congratulate him on the change in her Majesty’s demeanour. “The Queen is in very good terms with you now,” he said, “and, thanks be to God, well pacified, and *you are again her ‘sweet Robin.’*”²

Sir Walter wished to be himself the bearer of the comforting despatches to Leicester, on the ground that he had been represented as an “ill instrument against him,” and in order that he might justify himself against the charge, with his own lips. The Queen, however, while professing to make use of Shirley as the messenger, bade Walsingham declare to the Earl, upon her honour, that Raleigh had done good offices for him, and that, in the time of her anger, he had been as earnest in his defence as the best friend could be. It would have been singular, indeed, had it been otherwise. “Your Lordship,” said Sir Walter, “doth well understand my affection toward Spain, and how I have consumed the best part of my fortune, hating the tyrannous prosperity of that stata. It were strange and monstrous that I should now become an enemy to my country and conscience. All that I have desired at your Lordship’s hands is that you will evermore deal directly with me in all matters of suspect doubleness, and so ever esteem me as you shall find me deserving good or bad. In the mean time, let no poetical scribe work your Lordship by any device to doubt that I am a hollow or cold servant to the action.”³

It was now agreed that letters should be drawn up authorizing Leicester to continue in the office which he held, until

¹ Bruce, ‘Leyc. Corresp.’ 199, ^{31 March}_{10 April}, 1586.

² Bruce’s ‘Leyc. Corresp.’ 193, 194, ^{29 March}_{8 April}, 1586.

³ Ibid.

the state-council should devise some modification in his commission. As it seemed, however, very improbable that the board would devise anything of the kind, Burghley expressed the belief that the country was like to continue in the Earl's government without any change whatever. The Lord Treasurer was also of opinion that the Queen's letters to Leicester would convey as much comfort as he had received discomfort; although he admitted that there was a great difference. The former letters he knew had deeply wounded his heart, while the new ones could not suddenly sink so low as the wound.¹

The despatch to the States-General was benignant, elaborate, slightly diffuse. The Queen's letter to 'sweet Robin' was caressing, but argumentative.

"It is always thought," said she, "in the opinion of the world, a hard bargain when both parties are losers, and so doth fall out in the case between us two. You, as we hear, are greatly grieved in respect of the great displeasure you find we have conceived against you. We are no less grieved that a subject of ours of that quality that you are, a creature of our own, and one that hath always received an extraordinary portion of our favour above all our subjects, even from the beginning of our reign, should deal so carelessly, not to say contemptuously, as to give the world just cause to think that we are had in contempt by him that ought most to respect and reverence us, which, we do assure you, hath wrought as great grief in us as any one thing that ever happened unto us.

"We are persuaded that you, that have so long known us, cannot think that ever we could have been drawn to have taken so hard a course therein had we not been provoked by an extraordinary cause. But for that your grieved and wounded mind hath more need of comfort than reproof, who, we are persuaded, though the act of contempt can no ways be excused, had no other meaning and intent than to advance our service, we think meet to forbear to dwell upon a matter

¹ Bruce, 'Leyc. Corresp.', 202, ^{31 March}_{10 April}, 1586.

wherein we ourselves do find so little comfort, assuring you that whosoever professeth to love you best taketh not more comfort of your well doing, or discomfort of your evil doing than ourself."¹

After this affectionate preface she proceeded to intimate her desire that the Earl should take the matter as nearly as possible into his own hands. It was her wish that he should retain the *authority* of absolute governor, but—if it could be so arranged—that he should dispense with the *title*, retaining only that of her lieutenant-general. It was not her intention however, to create any confusion or trouble in the Provinces, and she was therefore willing that the government should remain upon precisely the same footing as that on which it then stood, until circumstances should permit the change of title which she suggested. And the whole matter was referred to the wisdom of Leicester, who was to advise with Heneage and such others as he liked to consult, although it was expressly stated that the present arrangement was to be considered a provisional and not a final one.²

¹ Bruce, 'Leya. Corresp.' 209,
April ¹/₁₁ 1586.

² Ibid. Queen to Leicester, ^{March 30,}
^{April 10} 1586. (S. P. Office MS.) On the day before, she had addressed a shorter letter of similar tenour to the Earl.

In her letters of the same date to Heneage, she congratulated both herself and the envoy that he had not been so precipitate in executing, as she had been in ordaining, the con-dign and public chastisement of the great delinquent. Sir Thomas might, in the humour in which the Queen now found herself, have even ventured upon a still longer delay, and a more decided mitigation, of the sentence. Tender, indeed, was the tone, compared with that in which she had so lately communicated her sentiments to the departing diplomatist, in which she now expressed her satisfaction that he had not been hasty in obeying "her secret directions touching the revocation of her cousin the Earl's government."

"We perceive by your letters," she observed, "that if the same had been executed according to our first purpose, it would have wrought some dangerous alteration in the state there, and utterly have overthrown the reputation and credit of our cousin, no less prejudicial to our service than the utter defacing and overthrow of one whom we ourselves have raised up, and have always found as greatly devoted to our service as ever sovereign found any subject. Though in his late proceeding touching the absolute government he did greatly forget himself, yet we would never have proceeded against him so severely had not our honour been touched. We are well persuaded that this offence and error grew not out of any evil meaning toward us, whose service we know he doth prefer even before his own life. And although we have assured him so much by our own letters, directed to him, yet we think meet you should labour, by all means, to comfort him, whose mind—as we understand from yourself and others—

Until this soothing intelligence could arrive in the Netherlands the suspicions concerning the underhand nego-

is greatly wounded and overthrown, and also to remove any hard opinion that may be formed against him, as a man quite shaken out of our favour."

Queen to Heneage, April ¹/₁₁ 1586.

(S. P. Office MS.)

She reiterated her instructions as to the repairing, as handsomely as possible, of the Earl's broken heart, in a style which was almost pathetic.

"You have been an eye-witness," she said, "of the great love we have always borne him above any subject we have, and therefore you can easily guess the grief we should conceive if he should miscarry. We doubt not therefore that you will leave nothing undone that may salve his wounded mind, and repair his credit, if you find the same decayed."

She was desirous that Sir Thomas should be the medium through which the Earl's pardon should be communicated to the States, as he had already been the vehicle which had borne to them her wrath. Although, therefore, she had written to themselves very much at length, she had yet reserved certain points upon which they were referred to the envoy for details. This proceeding she intended as an especial compliment to Heneage. "Forasmuch," so she expressed herself, "as you have already yielded the one part of the scorpion which is to wound, we think that we should do you wrong if you should not deliver some matter of contentment, whereby you may cure." (Ibid.)

She then proceeded to handle the two points contained in the last misgiving of the States-General to herself. Upon the first, namely, that the absolute government conferred on the Earl was not repugnant to the original treaty, and was offensive rather in name than in matter, she reasoned at considerable length. Her grounds of objection are, however, sufficiently well known. She considered that the acceptance without her permission savoured of contempt, and that an implied permission on her part was an impeachment on the self-deny-

nature of her original declarations. She had been most anxious, therefore, lest "the world should condemn her, as guilty of cunning and unprincely dealing"; nor had she seen the need of the extreme haste with which the matter had been concluded, without previous communication to herself.

As to the second point in the message of the States—that the Queen would be pleased to "stay the revocation of the authority granted" to Leicester, because of the imminent danger of such a proceeding—her Majesty's benignity, compared with her ferocity but a few short weeks before, seemed almost incredible.

"You shall proceed, in the answering of this point," said she, "*according to such resolution as shall be taken by our cousin the Earl*, upon debating the matter with you and such others as he shall call unto him for that purpose." (Ibid.)

Just one fortnight before, the Earl had been forced to stand, as it were, in a white sheet, with candle in hand, before the state-council. His heart had been broken in consequence, and he had resolved never again to appear in that chamber where he had been made to enact so sorry a part. Now a blank paper was furnished to himself and Heneage, which they were to inscribe with the most flattering expressions that could be desired from royal lips.

"You shall use all the persuasions you may," said Elizabeth, "to remove any opinion that may be conceived by the council of state to the hindrance or prejudice of our cousin the Earl's former reputation, as though the qualification which we now seek proceeded of any dislike that we had of any honour that hath been or may be yielded to him.... Assure them that they can no way better show the good-will they bear towards us than by continuing their former devotion toward the Earl, of whose love and devotion towards us, you may tell them, we make that account as of no other subject more." (Ibid.)

She then alluded to the reports

tiations with Spain grew daily more rife, and the discredit cast upon the Earl more embarrassing. The private letters

"thrown abroad" that she had a secret intention of treating for her own peace with the enemy apart, as "malicious bruits":—"For as our fortune," said she, in the most explicit language which pen could write, "is so joined with theirs, that the good or evil success of their affairs must needs harm or prosper ours, so you may assure them that we, for our part, are resolved to do nothing that may concern them without their own knowledge and good liking." (Ibid.)

The despatch to the States-General was very explicit on the subject of the title, but most affectionate in style.

"We find by your late letters," said the Queen, "that you are greatly grieved through some dislike conceived by us against you, in respect of the offer to our cousin of Leicester of the absolute government of the United Provinces being made without our privy, and contrary to our express commandment to the said Earl. We pray you, in this case, to consider that we were not rashly carried into this dislike, neither could we have been drawn into so hard and severe a course, had we not been provoked by two things that do greatly import us in honour. The one, that the Earl's acceptance, contrary to our commandment, might work in the opinion of the world, that it proceeded of contempt; the other, that we sought to abuse the world, in pretending outwardly that our proceedings with those countries tended only to relieve them in their distressed state against such as sought to tyrannise them, when the acceptance of the absolute government by the Earl, being a creature of our own, and known to be wholly at our devotion, could not but give them just cause to conceive otherwise of us. A matter we had just cause to look into, considering what a number of evil and malignant spirits do reign in these days, that are apt, upon the least advantage that may be, to deliver out hard and wicked censures of princes' doings." Queen to the States-General,

30 March 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)
9 April

The States were then reminded that, although there was nothing absolutely incompatible in the absolute government as accepted by Leicester with the nature of the original treaty, the Queen had resolutely set her face from the beginning against any such step, because she was "loath to give the world cause to think that she was moved by any other respect to assist them than by the love she bore them and the commiseration she had for their affliction." (Ibid.)

"And therefore," she continued, "seeing there was no special matter contained in the treaty that might any way give him any authority to accept the offer, reason would that before the matter had been proceeded in, we had been first made acquainted therewith. For we do not see, for anything that yet hath been declared unto us touching certain pretended dangers, but that the acceptance thereof might have been delayed until our pleasure had been first known. We hope that you have put on that conceit of us, as we would have been loath, either in respect of yourselves or of our cousin the Earl, to have proceeded so severely as we intended, if we had not been justly provoked thereunto. For yourselves, our love towards you cannot more plainly appear than in that we do oppose ourselves, for your sake, unto one of the mightiest potentates in Europe, without regard either to the expense of our treasure, or of our subjects' lives. And as touching the Earl, all the world knoweth that he is one of our own raising, and we do acknowledge that no man can carry more love than he hath ever shewed to bear towards us. And touching the cause of this our present offence, we do acknowledge our persuasion that the same proceeded of no evil meaning towards us, though good intents many times bring forth dangerous and evil fruits. If the offence had not grown out of a public and open action, none would have been more ready to have

which passed between the Earl's enemies in Holland and in England contained matter more damaging to himself and to the cause which he had at heart than the more public reports of modern days can disseminate, which, being patent to all, can be more easily contradicted. Leicester incessantly warned his colleagues of her Majesty's council against the malignant manufacturers of intelligence. "I pray you, my Lords, as you are wise," said he, "beware of them all. You shall find them here to be *shrewd pick-thinks*, and hardly worth the hearkening unto."¹

He complained bitterly of the disgrace that was heaped upon him, both publicly and privately, and of the evil consequences which were sure to follow from the course pursued. "Never was man so villanously handled by letters out of England as I have been," said he, "not only advertising her Majesty's great dislike with me before this my coming over, but that I was an odious man in England, and so long as I tarried here that no help was to be looked for, that her Majesty would send no more men or money, and that I was used here but for a time till a peace were concluded between her Majesty and the Prince of Parma. What the continuance of a man's discredit thus will turn out is to be thought of, for better I were a thousand times displaced than that her Majesty's great advantage of so notable Provinces should be hindered."²

hidden the same than ourselves. Therefore, we pray you to think that this dislike of ours hath grown rather out of grief, in respect of the love we bear him, than out of indignation, as one of whom we have conceived a sinister opinion, whom we do esteem as greatly devoted towards us as ever subject was to prince; and so we hope you will use him, without either diminishing any part of that good-will and love that you have hitherto professed towards him, or leaving that respect that is due unto him as our minister, or that he may justly challenge at your hands, who, for your sakes, is content to expose both his life and fortune unto any peril, which

is not the least cause why we esteem so greatly of him. And whereas, by your late letters, you have signified that the commission and authority granted unto him cannot be revoked without great peril to the state, we have given authority to our cousin the Earl, and to our servant Sir Thomas Heneage, to confer with you upon some course to be taken, as we conceive both our honour may be saved and the peril avoided. We pray you to bend yourselves to do that, as both the one and the other may be provided for." (Ibid.)

¹ Leicester to Burghley, ⁶ April, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.) ² Ibid.

As to the peace-negotiations—which, however cunningly managed, could not remain entirely concealed—the Earl declared them to be as idle as they were disingenuous. “I will boldly pronounce that all the peace you can make in the world, leaving these countries,” said he to Burghley, “will never prove other than a fair spring for a few days, to be all over blasted with a hard storm after.”¹ Two days later her Majesty’s comforting letters arrived, and the Earl began to raise his drooping head. Heneage, too, was much relieved, but he was, at the same time, not a little perplexed. It was not so easy to undo all the mischief created by the Queen’s petulance. The “scorpion’s sting”—as her Majesty expressed herself—might be balsamed, but the poison had spread far beyond the original wound.

“The letters just brought in,” wrote Heneage to Burghley, “have well relieved a most noble and sufficient servant, but I fear they will not restore the much-repaired wrecks of these far-decayed noble countries into the same state I found them in. A loose, disordered, and unknit state needs no shaking, but propping. A subtle and fearful kind of people should not be made more distrustful, but assured.”² He then expressed annoyance at the fault already found with him, and surely if ever man had cause to complain of reproofs administered him, in quick succession, for not obeying contradictory directions following upon each other as quickly, that man was Sir Thomas Heneage. He had been, as he thought, over cautious in administering the rebuke to the Earl’s arrogance, which he had been expressly sent over to administer; but scarcely had he accomplished his task, with as much delicacy as he could devise, when he found himself censured, not for dilatoriness, but for haste. “*Fault I perceive*,” said he to Burghley, “*is found in me*, not by your Lordship, but by some other, *that I did not stay proceeding if I found the public cause might take hurt*. It is true I had good warrant for the

¹ Leicester to Burghley, MS. last cited.

² Heneage to Burghley, $\frac{5}{18}$ April, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

manner, the place, and the persons, but for *the matter none, for done it must be*. Her Majesty's offence must be declared. Yet if I did not all I possibly could to uphold the cause, and to keep the tottering cause upon the wheels, I deserve no thanks, but reproof."¹

Certainly, when the blasts of royal rage are remembered, by which the envoy had been, as it were, blown out of England into Holland, it is astonishing to find his actions censured for undue precipitancy. But it was not the first, nor was it likely to be the last time for comparatively subordinate agents in Elizabeth's government to be distressed by contradictory commands, when the sovereign did not know, or did not chose to make known, her own mind on important occasions. "Well, my Lord," said plaintive Sir Thomas, "wiser men may serve more pleasingly and happily, but never shall any serve her Majesty more faithfully and heartily. And so I cannot be persuaded her Majesty thinketh; for from herself I find nothing but most sweet and gracious favour, though by others' censures I may gather otherwise of her judgment, which I confess doth cumber me."²

He was destined to be cumbered more than once before these negotiations should be concluded, but meantime there was a brief gleam of sunshine. The English friends of Leicester in the Netherlands were enchanted with the sudden change in the Queen's humour; and to Lord Burghley, who was not, in reality, the most staunch of the absent Earl's defenders, they poured themselves out in profuse and somewhat superfluous gratitude.³

Cavendish, in strains exultant, was sure that Burghley's children, grand-children, and remotest posterity, would rejoice that their great ancestor, in such a time of need, had been

¹ Letter to Burghley, MS. last cited.

² *Ibid.*

³ North to Burghley, ⁹/₁₉ April, 1586, (S. P. Office MS.)

No greater mistake could have been made than to insinuate, as Leicester's English correspondents had insin-

ated, that North was a secret enemy to Leicester, and had maligned him in his letters to influential personages at home. I have read many of North's unpublished letters to Burghley and other statesmen, and they all speak of the Earl in strongest language of admiration and attachment.

"found and felt to be indeed a pater patriæ, a good father to a happy land." And, although unwilling to "stir up the old Adam" in his Lordship's soul, he yet took the liberty of comparing the Lord Treasurer, in his old and declining years, to Mary Magdalen, assuring him, that for ever after, when the tale of the preservation of the Church of God, of her Majesty, and of the Netherland cause, which were all one, should be told, his name and well-doing would be held in memory also.¹

And truly there was much of honest and generous enthusiasm, even if couched in language somewhat startling to the ears of a colder and more material age, in the hearts of these noble volunteers. They were fighting the cause of England, of the Netherland republic, and of human liberty, with a valour worthy the best days of English chivalry, against manifold obstacles, and they were certainly not too often cheered by the beams of royal favour.

It was a pity that a dark cloud was so soon again to sweep over the scene. For the temper of Elizabeth at this important juncture seemed as capricious as the April weather in which the scenes were enacting. We have seen the genial warmth of her letters and messages to Leicester, to Heneage, to the States-General, on the first of the month. Nevertheless it was hardly three weeks after they had been despatched, when Walsingham and Burghley found her Majesty one morning in a towering passion, because the Earl had not already laid down the government. The Lord Treasurer ventured to re-

¹ Richard Cavendish to Burghley,
⁸ April, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)
¹⁵

"It may please you to think with yourself what a favour the Lord hath herein bestowed upon you in these your old and declining years, namely, from your good and happy labours to adorn your posterity with the note of this most just and worthy renown, that such a father, a grand-father, or ancestor of theirs, in such a needful time, was both found and felt to be indeed pater patriæ, a good father to a happy land. Suspicion of flattery ought of right to be secluded, where

assured truth doth enforce the conclusion. Neither do I write this to stir up in your Lordship old Adam, but knowing you well have learned Christ, I do it only to quicken in you the joy of well-doing, grounded upon faith. For if the Lord himself refrained not to add unto Mary Magdalen's well-doing this ornament unto her name for ever, that wheresoever the Gospel should be preached, there should also the memorial of that her act be had in record, then doubt I not but that example may well warrant me," &c.

monstrate, but was bid to hold his tongue. Ever variable and mutable as woman, Elizabeth was perplexing and baffling to her counsellors, at this epoch, beyond all divination. The "sparing humour" was increasing fearfully, and she thought it would be easier for her to slip out of the whole expensive enterprise, provided Leicester were merely her lieutenant-general, and not stadholder for the Provinces. Moreover the secret negotiations for peace were producing a deleterious effect upon her mind. Upon this subject, the Queen and Burghley, notwithstanding his resemblance to Mary Magdalen, were better informed than the Secretary, whom, however, it had been impossible wholly to deceive. The man who could read secrets so far removed as the Vatican, was not to be blinded to intrigues going on before his face. The Queen, without revealing more than she could help, had been obliged to admit that informal transactions were pending, but had authorised the Secretary to assure the United States that no treaty would be made without their knowledge and full concurrence. "She doth think," wrote Walsingham to Leicester, "that you should, if you shall see no cause to the contrary, acquaint the council of state there that certain overtures of peace are daily made unto her, but that she meaneth not to proceed therein *without their good liking and privity*, being persuaded that there can no peace be made profitable or sure for her that shall not also stand with their safety; and she doth acknowledge hers to be so linked with theirs as nothing can fall out to their prejudice, but she must be partaker of their harm."¹

This communication was dated on the 21st April, exactly three weeks after the Queen's letter to Heneage, in which she had spoken of the "malicious bruits" concerning the pretended peace-negotiations; and the Secretary was now confirming, by her order, what she had then stated under her own hand, that she would "do nothing that might concern them without *their own knowledge and good liking*."

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 232, $\frac{21 \text{ April}}{1 \text{ May}}$, 1586.

And surely nothing could be more reasonable. Even if the strict letter of the August treaty between the Queen and the States did not provide against any separate negotiations by the one party without the knowledge of the other, there could be no doubt at all that its spirit absolutely forbade the clandestine conclusion of a peace with Spain by England alone, or by the Netherlands alone, and that such an arrangement would be disingenuous, if not positively dishonourable.

Nevertheless it would almost seem that Elizabeth had been taking advantage of the day when she was writing her letter to Heneage on the 1st of April. Never was painstaking envoy more elaborately trifled with. On the 26th of the month—and only five days after the communication by Walsingham just noticed—the Queen was furious that any admission should have been made to the States of their right to participate with her in peace-negotiations.

"We find that Sir Thomas Heneage," said she to Leicester, "hath gone further—in assuring the States that we would make no peace without their privy and assent—than he had commission; for that our direction was—if our meaning had been well set down, and not mistaken by our Secretary—that they should have been only let understand that in any treaty that might pass between us and Spain, they might be well assured we would have no less care of their safety than of our own."¹

Secretary Walsingham was not likely to mistake her Majesty's directions in this or any other important affair of state.² Moreover, it so happened that the Queen had, in her own letter to Heneage, made the same statement which

¹ Queen to Leicester, $\frac{26 \text{ April}}{6 \text{ May}}$, 1586.

(S. P. Office MS.)

Almost the same words were used in a letter to Sir Thomas Heneage of the same date, $\frac{26 \text{ April}}{6 \text{ May}}$, 1586. (S. P.

Office MS.) Printed also in Bruce, p. 241, from a copy in the handwriting of Heneage in the British Museum.

² "When she chargeth your Lordship," wrote Walsingham to Leicester

$\frac{20}{30}$ May, 1586), "with the acquainting the council of state there with the overtures of peace made unto her by the Prince of Parma as a fault, herein your Lordship is wronged, for the fault is mine, if any were committed. *But in very truth, she gave me commandment to direct you to acquaint them withal, though now she doth deny it. I have received, within these few days, many of these hard measures.*" Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' p. 272.

she now chose to disavow. She had often a convenient way of making herself misunderstood, when she thought it desirable to shift responsibility from her own shoulders upon those of others; but upon this occasion she had been sufficiently explicit. Nevertheless, a scape-goat was necessary, and unhappy the subordinate who happened to be within her Majesty's reach when a vicarious sacrifice was to be made. Sir Francis Walsingham was not a man to be brow-beaten or hood-winked, but Heneage was doomed to absorb a fearful amount of royal wrath.

"What phlegmatical reasons soever were made you," wrote the Queen, who but three weeks before had been so gentle and affectionate to her ambassador, "how happeneth it that you will not remember, that when a man hath faulted and committed by abettors thereto, neither the one nor the other will willingly make their own retreat. Jesus! what availeth wit, when it falls the owner at greatest need? Do that you are bidden, and leave your considerations for your own affairs. For in some things you had clear commandment, which you did not, and in others none, and did. We princes be wary enough of our bargains. Think you I will be bound by your own speech to *make no peace for mine own matters without their consent? It is enough that I injure not their country nor themselves in making peace for them without their consent.* I am assured of your dutiful thoughts, but I am utterly at squares with this childish dealing."¹

Blasted by this thunderbolt falling upon his head out of serene sky, the sad Sir Thomas remained, for a time, in a state of political annihilation. 'Sweet Robin' meanwhile, though stunned, was unscathed—thanks to the convenient conductor at his side. For, in Elizabeth's court, mediocrity was not always golden, nor was it usually the loftiest mountains that the lightnings smote. The Earl was deceived by his royal mistress, kept in the dark as to important trans-

¹ Queen to Heneage, $\frac{26 \text{ April}}{6 \text{ May}}$, 1586.
(S. P. Office MS.) Printed also in

Bruce (p. 243), from a copy in the handwriting of Heneage in the Brit Mus.)

actions, left to provide for his famishing soldiers as he best might ; but the Queen at that moment, though angry, was not disposed to trample upon him. Now that his heart was known to be broken, and his sole object in life to be retirement to remote regions—India¹ or elsewhere—there to languish out the brief remainder of his days in prayers for Elizabeth's happiness, Elizabeth was not inclined very bitterly to upbraid him. She had too recently been employing herself in binding up his broken heart, and pouring balm into the "scorpion's sting," to be willing so soon to deprive him of those alleviations.

Her tone was however no longer benignant, and her directions were extremely peremptory. On the 1st of April she had congratulated Leicester, Heneage, the States, and all the world, that her secret commands had been staid, and that the ruin which would have followed, had those decrees been executed according to her first violent wish, was fortunately averted. Heneage was even censured, not by herself, but by courtiers in her confidence, and with her concurrence, for being *over hasty* in going before the state-council, as he had done, with her messages and commands. On the 26th of April she expressed astonishment that Heneage had dared to be so *dilatory*, and that the title of governor had not been laid down by Leicester "*out of hand*."² She marvelled greatly, and found it very strange that "ministers in matters of moment should presume to do things of their own head without direction."³ She accordingly gave orders that there should be no more dallying, but that the Earl should immediately hold a conference with the state-council in order to arrange a modification in his commission. It was her pleasure that he should retain all the authority granted to him by the States, but as already intimated by her, that he should abandon the title of "absolute governor," and retain only that of her lieutenant-general.⁴

¹ Bruce's 'Leyce. Corresp.' p. 217.

² Queen to Leicester, $\frac{28 \text{ April}}{6 \text{ May}}$, 1586.
(S. P. Office MS.)

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid. See also Queen to Heneage, same date. (S. P. Office MS.; and printed in Bruce, p. 242.)

Was it strange that Heneage, placed in so responsible a situation, and with the fate of England, of Holland, and perhaps of all Christendom, hanging in great measure upon this delicate negotiation, should be amazed at such contradictory orders, and grieved by such inconsistent censures?

"To tell you my griefs and my lacks," said he to Walsingham, "would little please you or help me. Therefore I will say nothing, but think there was never man in so great a service received so little comfort and so contrarious directions. But Dominus est adjutor in tribulationibus. If it be possible, let me receive some certain direction, in following which I shall not offend her Majesty, what good or hurt soever I do besides."¹

This certainly seemed a loyal and reasonable request, yet it was not one likely to be granted. Sir Thomas, perplexed, puzzled, blindfolded, and brow-beaten, always endeavoring to obey orders, when he could comprehend them, and always hectoring and lecturing whether he obeyed them or not—ruined in purse by the expenses of a mission on which he had been sent without adequate salary—appalled at the disaffection waxing more formidable every hour in Provinces which were recently so loyal to her Majesty, but which were now pervaded by a suspicion that there was double-dealing upon her part—became quite sick of his life. He fell seriously ill, and was disappointed, when, after a time, the physicians declared him convalescent. For when he rose from his sick-bed, it was only to plunge once more, without a clue, into the labyrinth where he seemed to be losing his reason.

"It is not long," said he to Walsingham, "since I looked to have written you no more letters, my extremity was so great. . . . But God's will is best, otherwise I could have liked better to have cumbered the earth no longer, where I find myself contemned, and which I find no reason to see will be the better in the wearing. . . . It were better for her Majesty's service that the directions which

¹ Heneage to Walsingham, $\frac{3}{15}$ May, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

come were not contrarious one to another, and that those you would have serve might know what is meant, else they cannot but much deceive you, as well as displease you.”¹

Public opinion concerning the political morality of the English court was not gratifying, nor was it rendered more favourable by these recent transactions. “I fear,” said Heneage, “that the world will judge what Champagny wrote in one of his letters out of England (which I have lately seen) to be over true. His words be these, ‘Et de vray, c’est le plus fascheux et le plus incertain negociier de ceste court, que je pense soit au monde.’”² And so “hasting,” as he said, “with a weak body and a willing mind, to do, he feared, no good work,” he set forth from Middelburgh to rejoin Leicester at Arnheim, in order to obey, as well as he could, the Queen’s latest directions.³

But before he could set to work there came more “contrarious” orders. The last instructions, both to Leicester and himself, were that the Earl should resign the post of governor absolute “out of hand,” and the Queen had been vehement in denouncing any delay on such an occasion. He was now informed, that, after consulting with Leicester and with the state-council, he was to return to England with the result of such deliberations. It could afterwards be decided how the Earl could retain all the authority of governor absolute, while bearing only the title of the Queen’s lieutenant general.⁴ “For her meaning is not,” said Walsingham, “that his Lordship should presently give it over, for she foreseeeth in her princely judgment that his giving over the government upon a sudden, and leaving those countries without a head or

¹ Heneage to Walsingham, $\frac{1}{11}$ May, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Ibid.

³ Heneage to Burghley, same date. (S. P. Office MS.) “For her Majesty’s services,” said he to the Lord Treasurer, as he had said to the Secretary of State, “it were very convenient, that such as you would have serve you here might know truly what you

mean, and might accordingly have certain directions what to do. And surely hitherto, so have not I had, which is the only cause why I cannot in this service please you there, which God knoweth I most care for, if I could tell how.”

⁴ Walsingham to Heneage, $\frac{14}{14}$ May, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

director, cannot but breed a most dangerous alteration there.”¹ The secretary therefore stated the royal wish at present to be that the “renunciation of the title” should be delayed till Heneage could visit England, and subsequently return to Holland with her Majesty’s further directions. Even the astute Walsingham was himself puzzled, however, while conveying these ambiguous orders; and he confessed that he was doubtful whether he had rightly comprehended the Queen’s intentions. Burghley, however, was better at guessing riddles than he was, and so Heneage was advised to rely chiefly upon Burghley.²

But Heneage had now ceased to be interested in any enigmas that might be propounded by the English court, nor could he find comfort, as Walsingham had recommended he should do, in railing. “I wish I could follow your counsel,” he said, “but sure the uttering of my choler doth little ease my grief or help my case.”³

He rebuked, however, the inconsistency and the tergiversations of the government with a good deal of dignity. “This certainly shall I tell her Majesty,” he said, “if I live to see her, that except a more constant course be taken with this inconstant people, it is not the blaming of her ministers will advance her Highness’s service, or better the state of things. And shall I tell you what they now say here of us—I fear not without some cause—even as Lipsius wrote of the French, ‘De Gallis quidem enigmata veniunt, non veniunt, volunt, nolunt, audent, timent, omnia, ancipiti metu, suspensa et suspecta.’ God grant better, and ever keep you and help me.”⁴

He announced to Burghley that he was about to attend a meeting of the state-council the next day, for the purpose of a conference on these matters at Arnheim, and that he would

¹ Same to same. Same date.

² Ibid. “This I take to be the substance of her Majesty’s pleasure,” said Sir Francis, “which she willed both the Lord Treasurer and Mr. Vice-Chamberlain, together with myself, to signify unto you, praying you, for that I think my Lord Treasurer

hath best conceived her Majesty’s meaning, that you will chiefly rely upon such direction as you shall receive from him.” (MS. last cited.)

³ Heneage to Walsingham, ^{26 May} 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Ibid.

then set forth for England to report proceedings to her Majesty. He supposed, on the whole, that this was what was expected of him, but acknowledged it hopeless to fathom the royal intentions. Yet if he went wrong, he was always sure to make mischief, and though innocent, to be held accountable for others' mistakes. "Every prick I make," said he, "is made a gash; and to follow the words of my directions from England is not enough, except I likewise see into your minds. And surely mine eyesight is not so good. But I will pray to God for his help herein. With all the wit I have, I will use all the care I can—first, to satisfy her Majesty, as God knoweth I have ever most desired; then, not to hurt this cause, but that I despair of."¹ Leicester, as may be supposed, had been much discomfited and perplexed during the course of these contradictory and perverse directions. There is no doubt whatever that his position had been made discreditable and almost ridiculous, while he was really doing his best, and spending large sums out of his private fortune to advance the true interests of the Queen. He had become a suspected man in the Netherlands, having been, in the beginning of the year, almost adored as a Messiah. He had submitted to the humiliation which had been imposed upon him, of being himself the medium to convey to the council the severe expressions of the Queen's displeasure at the joint action of the States-General and himself. He had been comforted by the affectionate expressions with which that explosion of feminine and royal wrath had been succeeded. He was now again distressed by the peremptory command to do what was a disgrace to him, and an irreparable detriment to the cause, yet he was humble and submissive, and only begged to be allowed, as a remedy for all his anguish, to return to the sunlight of Elizabeth's presence. He felt that her course, if persisted in, would lead to the destruction of the Netherland commonwealth, and eventually to the downfall of England; and that the Provinces, believing themselves deceived by the

¹ Renée to Burghley, ²⁸ May, ⁴ June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

Queen, were ready to revolt against an authority to which, but a short time before, they were so devotedly loyal. Nevertheless, he only wished to know what his sovereign's commands distinctly were, in order to set himself to their fulfilment. He had come from the camp before Nymegen in order to attend the conference with the state-council at Arnheim, and he would then be ready and anxious to despatch Heneage to England, to learn her Majesty's final determination.

He protested to the Queen that he had come upon this arduous and perilous service only because he considered her throne in danger, and that this was the only means of preserving it; that, in accepting the absolute government, he had been free from all ambitious motives, but deeply impressed with the idea that only by so doing could he conduct the enterprise entrusted to him to the desired consummation; and he declared with great fervour that no advancement to high office could compensate him for this enforced absence from her. To be sent back even in disgrace would still be a boon to him, for he should cease to be an exile from her sight. He knew that his enemies had been busy in defaming him, while he had been no longer there to defend himself, but his conscience acquitted him of any thought which was not for her happiness and glory. "Yet grievous it is to me," said he in a tone of tender reproach, "that having left all—yea, all that may be imagined—for you, you have left me for very little, even to the uttermost of all hard fortune. For what have I, unhappy man, to do here either with cause or country but for you?"¹

He stated boldly that his services had not been ineffective, that the enemy had never been in worse plight than now, that he had lost at least five thousand men in divers overthrows, and that, on the other hand, the people and towns of the Seven Provinces had been safely preserved. "Since my arrival," he said, "God hath blessed the action which you

¹ Leicester to the Queen, ^{23 May}_{3 June} 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

have taken in hand, and committed to the charge of me your poor unhappy servant. I have good cause to say somewhat for myself, for that I think I have as few friends to speak for me as any man.”¹

Nevertheless—as he warmly protested—his only wish was to return ; for the country in which he had lost her favour, which was more precious than life, had become odious to him. The most lowly office in her presence was more to be coveted than the possession of unlimited power away from her. It was by these tender and soft insinuations, as the Earl knew full well, that he was sure to obtain what he really coveted—her sanction for retaining the absolute government in the Provinces. And most artfully did he strike the key.

“Most dear and gracious Lady,” he cried, “my care and service here do breed me nothing but grief and unhappiness. I have never had your Majesty’s good favour since I came into this charge—a matter that from my first beholding your eyes hath been most dear unto me above all earthly treasures. Never shall I love that place or like that soil which shall cause the lack of it. Most gracious Lady, consider my long, true, and faithful heart toward you. Let not this unfortunate place here bereave me of that which, above all the world, I esteem there, which is your favour and your presence. I see my service is not acceptable, but rather more and more disliketh you. Here I can do your Majesty no service ; there I can do you some, at the least rub your horse’s heels—a service which shall be much more welcome to me than this, with all that these men may give me. I do, humbly and from my heart, prostrate at your feet, beg this grace at your sacred hands, that you will be pleased to let me return to my home-service, with your favour, let the revocation be used in what sort shall please and like you. But if ever spark of favour was in your Majesty toward your old servant, let me obtain this my humble suit ; protesting before the Majesty of all Majesties, that there was no cause under Heaven but his and yours, even for your own special and particular cause,

¹ Leicester to the Queen, MS. just cited.

I say, could have made me take this absent journey from you in hand. If your Majesty shall refuse me this, I shall think all grace clean gone from me, and I know my days will not be long."¹

She must melt at this, thought 'sweet Robin' to himself; and meantime, accompanied by Heneage, he proceeded with the conferences in the state-council-chamber, touching the modification of the title and the confirmation of his authority. This, so far as Walsingham could divine, and Burghley fathom, was the present intention of the Queen. He averred that he had ever sought most painfully to conform his conduct to her instructions as fast as they were received, and that he should continue so to do. On the whole, it was decided by the conference to let matters stand as they were for a little longer, and until after Heneage should have time once more to go and come. "The same manner of proceeding that was is now," said Leicester. "Your pleasure is declared to the council here as you have willed it. How it will fall out again in your Majesty's construction, the Lord knoweth."²

Leicester might be forgiven for referring to higher powers for any possible interpretation of her Majesty's changing humour; but meantime, while Sir Thomas was getting ready for his expedition to England, the Earl's heart was somewhat gladdened by more gracious messages from the Queen. The alternation of emotions would however prove too much for him, he feared, and he was reluctant to open his heart to so unwonted a tenant as joy.

"But that my fear is such, most dear and gracious Lady," he said, "as my unfortunate destiny will hardly permit, whilst I remain here, any good acceptance of so simple a service as mine, I should greatly rejoice and comfort myself with the hope of your Majesty's most prayed-for favour. But of late, being by your own sacred hand lifted even up into Heaven with joy of your favour, I was bye and bye, without any new

¹ Leicester to the Queen, $\frac{28 \text{ May}}{2 \text{ June}}$, 1586, MS. last cited.

² Same to same, $\frac{27 \text{ May}}{6 \text{ June}}$, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

desert or offence at all, cast down and down again into the depth of all grief. God doth know, my dear and dread Sovereign, that after I first received your resolute pleasure by Sir Thomas Heneage, I made neither stop nor stay, nor any excuse to be rid of this place, and to satisfy your command.

. . . . So much I mislike this place and fortune of mine, as I desire nothing in the world so much as to be delivered, with your favour, from all charge here, fearing still some new cross of your displeasure to fall upon me, trembling continually with the fear thereof, in such sort as till I may be fully confirmed in my new regeneration of your wonted favour I cannot receive that true comfort which doth appertain to so great a hope. Yet I will not only acknowledge with all humbleness and dutiful thanks the exceeding joy these last blessed lines brought to my long-wearied heart, but will, with all true loyal affection, attend that further joy from your sweet self which may utterly extinguish all consuming fear away."¹

Poor Heneage—who likewise received a kind word or two after having been so capriciously and petulantly dealt with—was less extravagant in his expressions of gratitude. "The Queen hath sent me a paper-plaister, which must please for a time," he said. "God Almighty bless her Majesty ever, and best direct her."² He was on the point of starting for England, the bearer of the States' urgent entreaties that Leicester might retain the government, and of despatches announcing the recent success of the allies before Grave. "God prospereth the action in these countries beyond all expectation," he said, "which all amongst you will not be over glad of, for somewhat I know."³ The intrigues

¹ Leicester to the Queen, $\frac{27 \text{ May}}{6 \text{ June}}$
1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Heneage to Walsingham, $\frac{28 \text{ May}}{7 \text{ June}}$
1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Ibid. Just before the envoy had signified to the States the last change in the royal humour, the Netherland council of state had addressed a letter to the Queen. In this document

they had excused the celerity with which, moved by the necessity of the case, they had conferred the absolute government upon the Earl. This measure, they said, passed by the unanimous vote of the Provinces, had wonderfully elevated the collapsed minds of the patriots, and filled the enemy with extreme consternation. The renewal of a general authority had laid an excellent foundation for

of Grafigni, Champagne, and Bodman, with Croft, Burghley, and the others, were not so profound a secret as they could wish.

The tone adopted by Leicester has been made manifest in

completely restoring the republic, had curbed the ferocious hearts of the enemy, had restrained the progress of a hostile army exulting in a career of extraordinary victories, and, with the blessing of God, had changed the fortunes of the war. The prosperity of the United Provinces had been restored by the dignity, virtue, and assiduous solicitude of the illustrious Earl, and was daily on the increase. They had therefore thanked her Majesty for accepting so benignantly their excuses for the authority conferred, and for no longer requiring its diminution. They expressed the opinion that it would be perilous—in the fragile condition of the republic—to change the word (*vocabulum*) absolute government, which could only be done at a special session of the States, called for that purpose. They feared that, by such a step, at the very moment of restored authority, they should throw prostrate all authority, and overwhelm the commonwealth with confusion. They declared their determination to cherish the dignity and honour of Leicester as being, under God and her Majesty, the foundation of their existence and their felicity. The States of the Provinces, and all individuals, were agreed in admiring and venerating his extraordinary prudence and assiduity. They acknowledged that the safety of the whole republic depended upon the care of the governor, who, moved by his zeal for the true religion, and his pity for their afflicted fortunes, had abandoned his private interests, his country, and the presence of his sovereign, to encounter all the adverse chances of their perturbed republic. (Bruce, 469-471, 1 May, 1586.)

Six weeks later (June 11, 1586, N.S.), after receiving the last communications of the Queen, the council again addressed her in similar strain, entrusting their despatches to Heneage, who was setting forth according to her commands. They expressed their

deep affliction that she should again so urgently demand the abrogation of the government-general. Not to comply with a requisition so seriously and repeatedly made, was, as they acknowledged, a grave offence. To comply with it, however, without manifest peril to the republic, was impossible. For the whole conservation of authority depended upon the title and office of governor. If that should shake and vacillate, they feared that in this very beginning of their prosperity, which was, through Divine Providence, every day augmenting, all things would fall headlong into utter ruin, to the joy of the common enemy, to whom the authority conferred upon the Earl was most formidable. For the lieutenantancy of the Queen, however great in itself, could never suffice to the administration of political affairs, without the government-general, which could not be adjoined to the lieutenantancy, but must proceed from the superior power residing in the States-General. Again, therefore, they most earnestly besought her Majesty to pardon the error which they had committed, through immoderate devotion to herself, and through the necessity of the times. Her sacred breast would, it was hoped, be moved to premit the proposed revocation, which could only be accomplished by solemn convocation of the orders, and by exposing the whole affair to the world, a step which, on account of the fluctuation of men's minds, and the insidious suggestions of the enemy, would be attended with infinite peril. They therefore most urgently demanded that the execution of her demand should be deferred, at least to a more convenient season. For the rest they referred the whole matter to the report of Heneage, who was about to return to England, fully instructed as to the views and wishes of the States. Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 472, June 11, 1586, N.S.

his letters to the Queen. He had held the same language of weariness and dissatisfaction in his communications to his friends. He would not keep the office, he avowed, if they should give him "all Holland and Zeeland, with all their appurtenances," and he was ready to resign at any moment. He was not "ceremonious for reputation," he said, but he gave warning that the Netherlanders would grow desperate if they found her Majesty dealing weakly or carelessly with them. As for himself he had already had enough of government. "I am weary, Mr. Secretary," he plaintively exclaimed, "indeed I am weary ; but neither of pains nor travail. My ill hap that I can please her Majesty no better hath quite discouraged me."¹

He had recently, however—as we have seen—received some comfort, and he was still further encouraged, upon the eve of Heneage's departure, by receiving another affectionate epistle from the Queen. Amends seemed at last to be offered for her long and angry silence, and the Earl was deeply grateful.

"If it hath not been, my most dear and gracious Lady," said he in reply, "no small comfort to your poor old servant to receive but one line of your blessed hand-writing in many months, for the relief of a most grieved, wounded heart, how far more exceeding joy must it be, in the midst of all sorrow, to receive from the same sacred hand so many comfortable lines as my good friend Mr. George hath at once brought me. Pardon me, my sweet Lady, if they cause me to forget myself. Only this I do say, with most humble dutiful thanks, that the scope of all my service hath ever been to content and please you ; and if I may do that, then is all sacrifice, either of life or whatsoever, well offered for you."²

The matter of the government absolute having been so fully discussed during the preceding four months, and the last opinions of the state-council having been so lucidly

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' pp. 262, 263, $\frac{8}{18}$ May, 1586.

² Leicester to the Queen, $\frac{14}{24}$ June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

expounded in the despatches to be carried by Heneage to England, the matter might be considered as exhausted. Leicester contented himself, therefore, with once more calling her Majesty's attention to the fact that if he had not himself accepted the office thus conferred upon him by the States, it would have been bestowed upon some other personage. It would hardly have comported with her dignity, if Count Maurice of Nassau, or Count William, or Count Moeurs, had been appointed governor absolute, for in that case the Earl, as general of the auxiliary English force, would have been subject to the authority of the chieftain thus selected. It was impossible, as the state-council had very plainly shown, for Leicester to exercise supreme authority, while merely holding the military office of her Majesty's lieutenant-general. The authority of governor or stadholder could only be derived from the supreme power of the country. If her Majesty had chosen to accept the sovereignty, as the States had ever desired, the requisite authority could then have been derived from her, as from the original fountain. As she had resolutely refused that offer however, his authority was necessarily to be drawn from the States-General, or else the Queen must content herself with seeing him serve as an English military officer, only subject to the orders of the supreme power, wherever that power might reside. In short, Elizabeth's wish that her general might be clothed with the privileges of her viceroy, while she declined herself to be the sovereign, was illogical, and could not be complied with.¹

Very soon after inditing these last epistles to the Provinces, the Queen became more reasonable on the subject; and an elaborate communication was soon received by the state-council, in which the royal acquiescence was signified to the latest propositions of the States. The various topics, suggested in previous despatches from Leicester and from the council, were reviewed, and the whole subject was suddenly placed in a somewhat different light from that in which it seemed to

¹ Leicester to the Queen. MS. last cited.

have been previously regarded by her Majesty. She alluded to the excuse, offered by the state-council, which had been drawn from the necessity of the case, and from their "great liking for her cousin of Leicester," although in violation of the original contract. "As you acknowledge, however," she said, "that therein you were justly to be blamed, and do crave pardon for the same, we cannot, upon this acknowledgment of your fault, but remove our former dislike."¹

Nevertheless it would now seem that her "mistake" had proceeded, not from the excess, but from the insufficiency of the powers conferred upon the Earl, and she complained, accordingly, that they had given him shadow rather than substance.²

Simultaneously with this royal communication, came a joint letter to Leicester, from Burghley, Walsingham, and Hatton, depicting the long and strenuous conflict which they had maintained in his behalf with the rapidly varying inclinations of the Queen. They expressed a warm sympathy with the difficulties of his position, and spoke in strong terms of the necessity that the Netherlands and England should work heartily together. For otherwise, they said, "the cause will fall, the enemy will rise, and we must stagger." Notwithstanding the secret negotiations with the enemy, which Leicester and Walsingham suspected, and

¹ Queen to Council of State, ¹⁶/₂₆ June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.); much corrected in Burghley's handwriting.

² Ibid. "Yet when we look," she proceeded, "into the little profit that the common cause hath received hitherto by the yielding unto him rather in words and writings a title of a kind of absolute government, than any effect of the authority signified by the words of the grant; for that by virtue thereof we understand that he can neither be made thoroughly acquainted with the true state of your affairs there, requisite for such an office as you have given him in name, nor yet receive the due performance of such contributions of money and other necessities, as were specially promised

unto him, before the acceptance of the government; inasmuch as for the lack of due satisfaction of the things promised, he hath been enforced to employ part of our treasure—sent over for the payment of such of our people as by the contract we promised to maintain—to pay and relieve such other forces as were entertained by the States . . . besides many other like burdens laid upon our cousin, contrary to our expectation; all this doth give us cause to *miske not so much the title itself*, as the lack of performance which the title carries show of—a matter, yea, of things most necessary for your own defence; a matter that, without speedy redress, cannot but breed both imminent peril to those countries and dishonour to us."

which will be more fully examined in a subsequent chapter, they held a language on that subject, which in the Secretary's mouth at least was sincere. "Whatsoever speeches be blown abroad of parleys of peace," they said, "all will be but smoke, yea fire will follow."¹

They excused themselves for their previous and enforced silence by the fact that they had been unable to communicate any tidings but messages of distress, but they now congratulated the Earl that her Majesty, as he would see by her letter to the council, was firmly resolved, not only to countenance his governorship, but to sustain him in the most thorough manner. It would be therefore quite out of the question *for them to listen to his earnest propositions to be recalled.*²

Moreover, the Lord Treasurer had already apprized Leicester that Heneage had safely arrived in England, that he had made his report to the Queen, and that her Majesty was "very well contented with him and his mission."³

It may be easily believed that the Earl would feel a sensation of relief, if not of triumph, at this termination to the embarrassments under which he had been labouring ever since he listened to the oration of the wise Leoninus upon New Years' Day. At last the Queen had formally acquiesced in the action of the States, and in his acceptance of their offer. He now saw himself undisputed "governor absolute," having been six months long a suspected, discredited, almost disgraced man. It was natural that he should express himself cheerfully.

"My great comfort received, oh my most gracious Lady," he said, "by your most favourable lines written by your own sacred hand, I did most humbly acknowledge by my former letter; albeit I can no way make testimony oft enough of

¹ Burghley, Hatton, and Walsingham, to Leicester, $\frac{17}{21}$ June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Ibid. "Her Majesty is not only minded," they said, "but, as we perceive, resolutely determined.—yea, persuaded fully—that it is necessary for your Lordship not only to continue in

the government, but to have it more amply established and perfected to all purposes for your credit and strength, and especially with money and men for maintenance of those countries against the enemy. We should greatly err, therefore, if we should at this time move her Majesty to recal you."

³ Bruce, 307.

the great joy I took thereby. And seeing *my wounded heart is by this means almost made whole*, I do pray unto God that either I may never feel the like again from you, or not be suffered to live, rather than I should fall again into those torments of your displeasure. Most gracious Queen, I beseech you, therefore, make perfect that which you have begun. Let not the common danger, nor any ill, incident to the place I serve you in, be accompanied with greater troubles and fears indeed than all the horrors of death can bring me. *My strong hope doth now so assure me, as I have almost won the battle against despair, and I do arm myself with as many of those wonted comfortable conceits as may confirm my new revived spirits, reposing myself evermore under the shadow of those blessed beams that must yield the only nourishment to this disease.*"¹

But however nourishing the shade of those blessed beams might prove to Leicester's disease, it was not so easy to bring about a very sunny condition in the Provinces. It was easier for Elizabeth to mend the broken heart of the governor than to repair the damage which had been caused to the commonwealth by her caprice and her deceit. The dispute concerning the government absolute had died away, but the authority of the Earl had got a "crack in it" which never could be handsomely made whole.² The States, during the long period of Leicester's discredit—feeling more and more doubtful as to the secret intentions of Elizabeth—disappointed in the condition of the auxiliary troops and in the amount of supplies furnished from England, and, above all, having had time to regret their delegation of a power which they began to find agreeable to exercise with their own hands, became indisposed to entrust the Earl with the administration and full inspection of their resources. To the enthusiasm which had greeted the first arrival of Elizabeth's representative

¹ Leicester to the Queen, $\frac{20}{30}$ June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² "My credit hath been cracked ever since her Majesty sent Sir Thomas

Heneage hither, as all men can tell you." Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 424, Oct. $\frac{2}{12}$ 1586.

had succeeded a jealous, carping, suspicious sentiment. The two hundred thousand florins monthly were paid, according to the original agreement, but the four hundred thousand of extra service-money subsequently voted were withheld, and withheld expressly on account of Heneage's original mission to disgrace the governor."¹

"The late return of Sir Thomas Heneage," said Lord North, "hath put such busses in their heads, as they march forward with leaden heels and doubtful hearts."²

In truth, through the discredit cast by the Queen upon the Earl in this important affair, the supreme authority was forced back into the hands of the States, at the very moment when they had most freely divested themselves of power. After the Queen had become more reasonable, it was too late to induce them to part, a second time, so freely with the immediate control of their own affairs. Leicester had become, to a certain extent, disgraced and disliked by the Estates. He thought himself, by the necessity of the case, forced to appeal to the people against their legal representatives, and thus the foundation of a nominally democratic party, in opposition to the municipal one, was already laid. Nothing could be more unfortunate at that juncture; for we shall, in future, find the Earl in perpetual opposition to the most distinguished statesmen in the Provinces; to the very men indeed who had been most influential in offering the sovereignty to England, and in placing him in the position which he had so much coveted. No sooner therefore had he been con-

¹ — "as to the not paying by the States of the 200,000 florins a-month, agreed upon," said Leicester to the Queen, "I must needs say that they have paid that 200,000, but that I stand upon of late with them is 200,000 more, which they long since agreed upon, and I sent word to your Majesty. And herein, indeed, they have been very slack; but if your Majesty will pardon me to speak the truth of that stay, it grew only upon Sir Thomas Heneage's coming with the message of your displeasure; for from

that time till this they have not only sought to hinder the agreement, but to intermeddle wholly again with all things which did appertain to my office. To withstand them—to be plain—I durst not, and they have applied it diligently since to work that conceit into every man's head," &c. &c. Leicester to the Queen, $\frac{14}{24}$ June, 1586, (S. P. Office MS.)

² North to Burghley, $\frac{20 \text{ May}}{8 \text{ June}}$ 1586 (S. P. Office MS.)

firmed by Elizabeth in that high office than his arrogance broke forth, and the quarrels between himself and the representative body became incessant.

"I stand now in somewhat better terms than I did," said he; "I was not in case till of late to deal roundly with them as I have now done. I have established a chamber of finances, against some of their wills, whereby I doubt not to procure great benefit to increase our ability for payments hereafter. The people I find still best devoted to her Majesty, though of late many lewd practices have been used to withdraw their good wills. But it will not be; they still pray God that her Majesty may be their sovereign. She should then see what a contribution they will all bring forth. *But to the States they will never return*, which will breed some great mischief, *there is such mislike of the States universally*. I would your Lordship had seen the case I had lived in among them these four months, especially after her Majesty's mislike was found. You would then marvel to see how I have waded, as I have done, through no small obstacles, without help, counsel, or assistance."¹

Thus the part which he felt at last called upon to enact was that of an aristocratic demagogue, in perpetual conflict with the burgher-representative body.

It is now necessary to lift a corner of the curtain, by which some international—or rather interpalatial—intrigues were concealed, as much as possible, even from the piercing eyes of Walsingham. The Secretary was, however, quite aware—despite the pains taken to deceive him—of the nature of the plots and of the somewhat ignoble character of the actors concerned in them.

¹ Leicester to Burghley, $\frac{18}{25}$ June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

CHAPTER VIII.

Forlorn Condition of Flanders — Parma's secret Negotiations with the Queen — Graßigni and Bodman — Their Dealings with English Counsellors — Duplicity of Farnese — Secret Offers of the English Peace-Party — Letters and Intrigues of De Loo — Drake's Victories and their Effect — Parma's Perplexity and Anxiety — He is relieved by the News from England — Queen's secret Letters to Parma — His Letters and Instructions to Bodman — Bodman's secret Transactions at Greenwich — Walsingham detects and exposes the Plot — The Intriguers baffled — Queen's Letter to Parma and his to the King — Unlucky Results of the Peace-Intrigues — Unhandsome Treatment of Leicester — Indignation of the Earl and Walsingham — Secret Letter of Parma to Philip — Invasion of England recommended — Details of the Project.

ALEXANDER FARNESE and his heroic little army had been left by their sovereign in as destitute a condition as that in which Lord Leicester and his unfortunate "paddy persons" had found themselves since their arrival in the Netherlands. These mortal men were but the weapons to be used and broken in the hands of the two great sovereigns, already pitted against each other in mortal combat. That the distant invisible potentate, the work of whose life was to do his best to destroy all European nationality, all civil and religious freedom, should be careless of the instruments by which his purpose was to be effected, was but natural. It is painful to reflect that the great champion of liberty and of Protestantism was almost equally indifferent to the welfare of the human creatures enlisted in her cause. Spaniards and Italians, English and Irish, went half naked and half starving through the whole inclement winter, and perished of pestilence in droves, after confronting the less formidable dangers of battle-field and leaguer. Manfully and sympathetically did the Earl of Leicester—while whining in absurd hyperbole over the angry demeanour of his sovereign towards himself—represent the imperative duty of an English government to succour English troops.

Alexander Farnese was equally plain-spoken to a sovereign with whom plain-speaking was a crime. In bold, almost scornful language, the Prince represented to Philip the sufferings and destitution of the little band of heroes, by whom that magnificent military enterprise, the conquest of Antwerp, had just been effected. "God will be weary of working miracles for us," he cried, "and nothing but miracles can save the troops from starving." There was no question of paying them their wages, there was no pretence at keeping them reasonably provided with lodging and clothing, but he asserted the undeniable proposition that they "could not pass their lives without eating,"¹ and he implored his sovereign to send at least money enough to buy the soldiers shoes. To go foodless and barefoot without complaining, on the frozen swamps of Flanders, in January, was more than was to be expected from Spaniards and Italians. The country itself was eaten bare. The obedient Provinces had reaped absolute ruin as the reward of their obedience. Bruges, Ghent, and the other cities of Brabant and Flanders, once so opulent and powerful, had become mere dens of thieves and paupers. Agriculture, commerce, manufactures—all were dead. The condition of Antwerp was most tragical. The city, which had been so recently the commercial centre of the earth, was reduced to absolute beggary. Its world-wide traffic was abruptly terminated, for the mouth of its great river was controlled by Flushing, and Flushing was in the firm grasp of Sir Philip Sidney, as governor for the English Queen. Merchants and bankers, who had lately been possessed of enormous resources, were stripped of all. Such of the industrial classes as could leave the place had wandered away to Holland and England. There was no industry possible, for there was no market for the products of industry. Antwerp was hemmed in by the enemy on every side, surrounded by royal troops in a condition of open mutiny, cut off from the ocean, deprived of daily bread, and yet obliged to contribute out of its poverty to the maintenance of the Spanish soldiers,

¹ "No se puede pasar la vida sin comer." Parma to Philip II. 28 Feb. 1586. (Archivo de Simancas, MS.)

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who were there for its destruction. Its burghers, compelled to furnish four hundred thousand florins, as the price of their capitulation, and at least six hundred thousand more¹ for the repairs of the dykes, the destruction of which, too long deferred, had only spread desolation over the country without saving the city, and over and above all forced to rebuild, at their own expense, that fatal citadel, by which their liberty and lives were to be perpetually endangered, might now regret at leisure that they had not been as steadfast during their siege as had been the heroic inhabitants of Leyden in their time of trial, twelve years before. Obedient Antwerp was, in truth, most forlorn. But there was one consolation for her and for Philip, one bright spot in the else universal gloom. The ecclesiastics assured Parma, that, notwithstanding the frightful diminution in the population of the city, they had confessed and absolved more persons that Easter than they had ever done since the commencement of the revolt. Great was Philip's joy in consequence.² "You cannot imagine my satisfaction," he wrote, "at the news you give me concerning last Easter."³

With a ruined country, starving and mutinous troops, a bankrupt exchequer, and a desperate and pauper population, Alexander Farnese was not unwilling to gain time by simulated negociations for peace. It was strange, however, that so sagacious a monarch as the Queen of England should suppose it for her interest to grant at that moment the very delay which was deemed most desirable by her antagonist.

Yet it was not wounded affection alone, nor insulted pride, nor startled parsimony, that had carried the fury of the Queen

¹ Parma to Philip II. 19 April, 1586. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

The contemporary historians of the country do not paint more frightful pictures of the desolation of Antwerp, and of the obedient Provinces generally, than those furnished by the Prince of Parma in his secret letters to his sovereign. Compare Bor, II. 984; Meteren, xiii. 253^v; Hoofd, Vervolg, 251, *et null. al.*

"Grandissima lastima," said Farnese

of Antwerp, "ver perdida tan principal villa, y la navegacion de ribera tan linda y provechosa no solo para el pais mas para todo el mundo." MS. before cited.

² Letter to Philip II. just cited.

³ "No podreys pensar el contento que me ha dado el aviso de la frecuencia que hubo a los sacramentos la pasqua pasada," &c. Philip II. to Parma, 5 July, 1586. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

to such a height on the occasion of Leicester's elevation to absolute government. It was still more, because the step was thought likely to interfere with the progress of those negotiations into which the Queen had allowed herself to be drawn.

A certain Grafigni—a Genoese merchant residing much in London and in Antwerp, a meddling, intrusive, and irresponsible kind of individual, whose occupation was gone with the cessation of Flemish trade—had recently made his appearance as a volunteer diplomatist. The principal reason for accepting or rather for winking at his services, seemed to be the possibility of disavowing him, on both sides, whenever it should be thought advisable. He had a partner or colleague, too, named Bodman, who seemed a not much more creditable negotiator than himself. The chief director of the intrigue was, however, Champagny, brother of Cardinal Granvelle, restored to the King's favour and disposed to atone by his exuberant loyalty for his heroic patriotism on a former and most memorable occasion.¹ Andrea de Loo, another subordinate politician, was likewise employed at various stages of the negotiation.

It will soon be perceived that the part enacted by Burghley, Hatton, Croft, and other counsellors, and even by the Queen herself, was not a model of ingenuousness towards the absent Leicester and the States-General. The gentlemen sent at various times to and from the Earl and her Majesty's government,—Davison, Shirley, Vavasor, Heneage, and the rest,—had all expressed themselves in the strongest language concerning the good faith and the friendliness of the Lord-Treasurer and the Vice-Chamberlain,² but they were not so well informed as they would have been, had they seen the private letters of Parma to Philip II.

Walsingham, although kept in the dark as much as it was possible, discovered from time to time the mysterious practices of his political antagonists, and warned the Queen of the

¹ In the memorable Antwerp fury. See 'Rise of the Dutch Republic,' vol. iii. chap. .

² Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' pp. 112,

124, 143, 161, 176, 231. Leicester to Burghley, 18 March, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

danger and dishonour shè was bringing upon herself.¹ Elizabeth, when thus boldly charged, equivocated and stormed alternately. She authorized Walsingham to communicate the secrets—which he had thus surprised—to the States-General, and then denied having given any such orders.²

In truth, Walsingham was only entrusted with such portions of the negotiations as he had been able, by his own astuteness, to divine; and as he was very much a friend to the Provinces and to Leicester, he never failed to keep them instructed, to the best of his ability. It must be confessed, however, that the shuffling and paltering among great men and little men, at that period, forms a somewhat painful subject of contemplation at the present day.

Grafigni having some merchandise to convey from Antwerp to London, went early in the year to the Prince of Parma, at Brussels, in order to procure a passport.³ They entered into some conversation upon the misery of the country, and particularly concerning the troubles to which the unfortunate merchants had been exposed. Alexander expressed much sympathy with the commercial community, and a strong desire that the ancient friendship between his master and the Queen of England might be restored. Grafigni assured the Prince—as the result of his own observation in England—that the Queen participated in those pacific sentiments. “You are going to England,” replied the Prince, “and you may say to the ministers of her Majesty, that, after my allegiance to my King, I am most favourably and affectionately inclined towards her. If it pleases them that I, *as Alexander Farnese*, should attempt to bring about an accord, and if our commissioners could be assured of a hearing in England, I would take care that everything should be conducted with due regard to the honour and reputation of her Majesty.”⁴

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 231
21 April, 1586; 272, $\frac{20}{30}$ May, 1586.

² Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 240,
26 April, 1586. Ibid. 272, $\frac{20}{30}$ May, 1586.

³ Copia del Papel de Agostino Gra-

figna, anno 1586. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

⁴ Ibid. “Che io, como Alessandro Farnese, praticassi a pico d' accordo con mio Re, y che li nostri commessi fussino sentiti in Ingleterra, tenerei modo che le cose passeriano con ogni honore & reputazione di S. M^a,” &c.

Grafigni then asked for a written letter of credence. "That cannot be," replied Alexander; "but if you return to me I shall believe your report, and then a proper person can be sent, with authority from the King to treat with her Majesty."¹

Grafigni proceeded to England, and had an interview with Lord Cobham. A few days later that nobleman gave the merchant a general assurance that the Queen had always felt a strong inclination to maintain firm friendship with the House of Burgundy. Nevertheless, as he proceeded to state, the bad policy of the King's ministers, and the enterprises against her Majesty, had compelled her to provide for her own security and that of her realm by remedies differing in spirit from that good inclination. Being however a Christian princess, willing to leave vengeance to the Lord and disposed to avoid bloodshed, she was ready to lend her ear to a negotiation for peace, if it were likely to be a sincere and secure one. Especially she was pleased that his Highness of Parma should act as mediator of such a treaty, as she considered him a most just and honourable prince in all his promises and actions. Her Majesty would accordingly hold herself in readiness to receive the honourable commissioners alluded to, feeling sure that every step taken by his Highness would comport with her honour and safety.²

At about the same time the other partner in this diplomatic enterprise, William Bodman, communicated to Alexander the result of his observations in England. He stated that Lords Burghley, Buckhurst, and Cobham, Sir Christopher Hatton, and Comptroller Croft, were secretly desirous of peace with Spain, and that they had seized the recent *opportunity of her pique against the Earl of Leicester*³ to urge forward these underhand negotiations. Some progress had been made; but as no accredited commissioner arrived from the Prince of

¹ Copia del Papel de Agostino Grafigna, MS. just cited.

² Papel de Grafigna, MS. before cited.

³ "Algun disgusto contra el Conde

de Lester," &c., from a document entitled 'Lo que en particular siente Guillemo Bodeman de las intenciones de Inglaterra, anno 1586.' (Archivo de Simancas, MS.)

Parma, and as Leicester was continually writing earnest letters against peace, the efforts of these counsellors had slackened. Bodman found them all, on his arrival, anxious as he said, "to get their necks out of the matter ;"¹ declaring everything which had been done to be pure matter of accident, entirely without the concurrence of the Queen, and each seeking to out rival the other in the good graces of her Majesty.² Grafigni informed Bodman, however, that Lord Cobham was quite to be depended upon in the affair, and would deal with him privately, while Lord Burghley would correspond with Andrea de Loo at Antwerp. Moreover, the servant of Comptroller Croft would direct Bodman as to his course, and would give him daily instructions.³

Now it so happened that this servant of Croft, Norris by name, was a Papist, a man of bad character, and formerly a spy of the Duke of Anjou.⁴ "If your Lordship or myself should use such instruments as this," wrote Walsingham to Leicester, "I know we should bear no small reproach ; but it is the good hap of hollow and doubtful men to be best thought of."⁵ Bodman thought the lords of the peace-faction and their adherents not sufficiently strong to oppose the other party with success. He assured Farnese that almost all the *gentlemen and the common people of England stood ready to risk* their fortunes and to go in person to the field to maintain the cause of the Queen and religious liberty ; and that the chance of peace was desperate unless something should turn the tide, such as, for example, the defeat of Drake, or an invasion by Philip of Ireland or Scotland.⁶

As it so happened that Drake was just then engaged in a magnificent career of victory, sweeping the Spanish Main and startling the nearest and the most remote possessions of the King with English prowess, his defeat was not one of the cards to be relied on by the peace-party in the somewhat deceptive game which they had commenced. Yet, strange to

¹ "Sacar el cuello y salirse a fuera."
(Ibid.)

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 231,

21 April,
1 May, 1586.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ "Lo que en particular siente G. Bodeman, &c. MS. last cited.

say, they used, or attempted to use, those splendid triumphs as if they had been disasters.

Meantime there was an active but very secret correspondence between Lord Cobham, Lord Burghley, Sir James Croft, and various subordinate personages in England, on the one side, and Champagny, President Richardot, La Motte, governor of Gravelines, Andrea de Loo, Grafigni, and other men in the obedient Provinces, more or less in Alexander's confidence, on the other side. Each party was desirous of forcing or wheedling the antagonist to show his hand. "You were employed to take soundings off the English coast in the Duke of Norfolk's time," said Cobham to La Motte: "you remember the Duke's fate. Nevertheless, her Majesty hates war, and it only depends on the King to have a firm and lasting peace."¹

"You must tell Lord Cobham," said Richardot to La Motte, "that you are not at liberty to go into a correspondence, until assured of the intentions of Queen Elizabeth. Her Majesty ought to speak first, in order to make her good-will manifest,"² and so on.

"The '*friend*' can confer with you," said Richardot to Champagny; "but his Highness is not to appear to know anything at all about it. The Queen must signify her intentions."³

"You answered Champagny correctly," said Burghley to De Loo, "as to what I said last winter concerning her Majesty's wishes in regard to a pacification. *The Netherlands must be compelled to return to obedience to the King*; but their ancient privileges are to be maintained. You omitted, however, to say a word about toleration, in the Provinces, of the reformed religion. But I said then, as I say now, that this is a condition indispensable to peace."⁴

This was a somewhat important omission on the part of De

¹ Lord Cobham to Sigr. de la Motte, 2 March, 1586. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

² Richardot to La Motte, 23 March, 1586. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

³ Richardot to Champagny, 24 March, 1586. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

⁴ 'Lettera del Sr. Gran Tesoriero d' Ingleterra a Andrea de Loo, verbatim translata dalla sua lingua in questra, 6 Marte, 1586. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

Loo, and gives the measure of his conscientiousness or his capacity as a negotiator. Certainly for the Lord-Treasurer of England to offer, on the part of her Majesty, to bring about the reduction of her allies under the yoke which they had thrown off without her assistance, and this without leave asked of them, and with no provision for the great principle of religious liberty, which was the cause of the revolt, was a most flagitious trifling with the honour of Elizabeth and of England. Certainly the more this mysterious correspondence is examined, the more conclusive is the justification of the vague and instinctive jealousy felt by Leicester and the States-General as to English diplomacy during the winter and spring of 1586.

Burghley summoned De Loo, accordingly, to recall to his memory all that had been privately said to him on the necessity of protecting the reformed religion in the Provinces. If a peace were to be perpetual, toleration was indispensable, he observed, and her Majesty was said to desire this condition most earnestly.¹

The Lord-Treasurer also made the not unreasonable suggestion, that, in case of a pacification, it would be necessary to provide that English subjects—peaceful traders, mariners, and the like—should no longer be shut up in the Inquisition-prisons of Spain and Portugal, and there starved to death, as, with great multitudes, had already been the case.²

Meantime Alexander, while encouraging and directing all these underhand measures, was carefully impressing upon his master that he was not, in the least degree, bound by any such negotiations. "Queen Elizabeth," he correctly observed to Philip, "is a woman : she is also by no means fond of expense. The kingdom, accustomed to repose, is already weary of war : therefore, they are all pacifically inclined."³ "It has been intimated to me," he said, "that if I would send a properly qualified person, who should declare that your Majesty had

¹ 'Lettera, &c., just cited.

² Ibid.

³ "La reyna, por ser muger, y sentir el gasto que la conviene hacer, y

cansarse aquel Reyno acostumbrado a su reposo," &c. Parma to Philip II. 30 Mar. 1586. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

not absolutely forbidden the coming of Lord Leicester, such an agent would be well received, and perhaps *the Earl would be recalled.*"¹ Alexander then proceeded, with the coolness befitting a trusted governor of Philip II., to comment upon the course which he was pursuing. He could at any time denounce the negotiations which he was secretly prompting. Meantime immense advantages could be obtained by the deception practised upon an enemy whose own object was to deceive.

The deliberate treachery of the scheme was cynically enlarged upon, and its possible results mathematically calculated. Philip was to proceed with the invasion while Alexander was going on with the negotiation. If, meanwhile, they could receive back Holland and Zeeland from the hands of England, that would be an immense success.² The Prince intimated a doubt, however, as to so fortunate a result, because, in dealing with heretics and persons of similar quality, nothing but trickery was to be expected. The chief good to be hoped for was to "chill the Queen in her plots, leagues, and alliances, and during the chill, to carry forward their own great design."³ To slacken not a whit in their preparations, to "put the Queen to sleep,"⁴ and, *above all, not to leave the French for a moment unoccupied with internal dissensions and civil war*; such was the game of the King and the governor, as expounded between themselves.⁵

President Richardot, at the same time, stated to Cardinal Granvelle that the English desire for peace was considered certain at Brussels. Grafigni had informed the Prince of Parma and his counsellors that the Queen was most amicably disposed, and that there would be no trouble on the point of religion, her Majesty not wishing to obtain more than she would herself be willing to grant. "In this," said Richardot, "there is both hard and soft;"⁶ for knowing that the Spanish

¹ Parma to Philip II., MS. last cited.

² Ibid.

³ "Que haya de servir mas para enfiarla en sus tramas, ligas, y adherencias," &c. (Ibid.)

⁴ "Para adormecerla." (Ibid.)

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ "En cecy il y a du dur & du mol." Richardot to Granvelle, 30 Mars 1586. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

game was deception, pure and simple, the excellent President could not bring himself to suspect a possible grain of good faith in the English intentions. Much anxiety was perpetually felt in the French quarter, her Majesty's government being supposed to be secretly preparing an invasion of the obedient Netherlands across the French frontier, in combination, not with the Béarnese, but with Henry III. So much in the dark were even the most astute politicians. "I can't feel satisfied in this French matter," said the President: "we mustn't tickle ourselves to make ourselves laugh."¹ Moreover, there was no self-deception nor self-tickling possible as to the unmitigated misery of the obedient Netherlands. Famine was a more formidable foe than Frenchmen, Hollanders, and Englishmen combined; so that Richardot avowed that the "negotiation would be indeed holy," if it would restore Holland and Zeeland to the King without fighting. The prospect seemed on the whole rather dismal to loyal Netherlanders like the old leaguings, intriguing, Hispaniolized president of the privy council. "I confess," said he plaintively, "that England needs chastisement; but I don't see how we are to give it to her. Only let us secure Holland and Zeeland, and then we shall always find a stick whenever we like to beat the dog."²

Meantime Andrea de Loo had been bustling and buzzing about the ears of the chief counsellors at the English court during all the early spring. Most busily he had been endeavouring to efface the prevalent suspicion that Philip and Alexander were only trifling by these informal negotiations. We have just seen whether or not there was ground for that suspicion. De Loo, being importunate, however—"as he usually was," according to his own statement—obtained in Burghley's hand a confirmation, by order of the Queen, of De Loo's letter of the 26th December. The matter of religion

¹ Il ne faut pas que nous nous chatouillions pour nous faire rire." (Ib.) Neither Richardot nor Parma himself could then foresee that within two months Henry III. would be proposing

to Philip II. a joint invasion of England!

² "Et nous sera aysé de trouver le baston quand nous voulons battre le chien." (Ibid.)

gave the worthy merchant much difficulty, and he begged Lord Buckhurst, the Lord Treasurer, and many other counsellors, not to allow this point of toleration to ruin the whole affair; "for," said he, "his Majesty will never permit any exercise of the reformed religion."¹

At last Buckhurst sent for him, and in presence of Comptroller Croft, gave him information that he had brought the Queen to this conclusion: firstly, that she would be satisfied with as great a proportion of religious toleration for Holland, Zeeland, and the other United Provinces, as his Majesty could concede with safety to his conscience and his honour;² secondly, that she required an act of amnesty; thirdly, that she claimed reimbursement by Philip for the money advanced by her to the States.³

Certainly a more wonderful claim was never made than this—a demand upon an absolute monarch for indemnity for expenses incurred in fomenting a rebellion of his own subjects. The measure of toleration proposed for the Provinces—the conscience, namely, of the greatest bigot ever born into the world—was likely to prove as satisfactory as the claim for damages propounded by the most parsimonious sovereign in Christendom. It was, however, stipulated that the non-conformists of Holland and Zeeland, who should be forced into exile, were to have their property administered by papist trustees; and further, that the Spanish inquisition was not to be established in the Netherlands. Philip could hardly demand better terms than these last, after a career of victory. That they should be offered now by Elizabeth was hardly compatible with good faith to the States.

On account of Lord Burghley's gout, it was suggested that the negotiators had better meet in England, as it would be necessary for him to take the lead in the matter, and as he was but an indifferent traveller. Thus, according to De Loo,

¹ Memorial d' Andrea de Loo del negotiato alla corte d' Inghilterra nel mese di Febraio e Marzo, 1586. (Archivo de Simancas, MS.)

² "Imprimis, che S. M^a si contenta di non estar altrimenti sul punto della

religione che d'ottenere dal Re quella tanta tolerantia per la Hollanda y la Zelanda con le altre provincie unite, che potra concedere con sua salva coscienza et honore." (Ibid.)

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

the Queen was willing to hand over the United Provinces to Philip, and to toss religious toleration to the winds, if she could only get back the seventy thousand pounds—more or less—which she had invested in an unpromising speculation. A few weeks later, and at almost the very moment when Elizabeth had so suddenly overturned her last vial of wrath upon the discomfited Heneage for having communicated—according to her express command—the fact of the pending negotiations to the Netherland States; at that very instant Parma was writing secretly, and in cipher, to Philip. His communication—could Sir Thomas have read it—might have partly explained her Majesty's rage.

Parma had heard, he said, through Bodman, from Comptroller Croft, that the Queen would willingly receive a proper envoy. It was very easy to see, he observed, that the English counsellors were seeking every means of entering into communication with Spain, and that they were doing so with the participation of the Queen.¹ Lord-Treasurer Burghley and Comptroller Croft had expressed surprise that the Prince had not yet sent a secret agent to her Majesty, under pretext of demanding explanations concerning Lord Leicester's presence in the Provinces, but in reality to treat for peace. Such an agent, it had been intimated, would be well received.² The Lord-Treasurer and the Comptroller would do all in their power to advance the negotiation, so that, with their aid and with the pacific inclination of the Queen, the measures proposed in favour of Leicester would be suspended, and perhaps the Earl himself and all the English would be recalled.³

The Queen was further represented as taking great pains to excuse both the expedition of Sir Francis Drake to the Indies, and the mission of Leicester to the Provinces. She was said to throw the whole blame of these enterprises upon Walsing-

¹ "Bien claro echa de ver que van buscando todos los que les parecen a proposito para entrar en comunicacion, y que lo hazen con la participacion de la Reyna." Parma to Philip II. 19 April, 1586. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

² Ibid.

³ "Y con esto y la inclinacion que tiene la Reyna á la paz, se suspendirian las proposiciones que se hazen en favor del Conde de Lestre, y quiza seria revocado el con todos los Ingleses." (Ibid.)

ham and other ill-intentioned personages, and to avow that she now understood matters better ; so that, if Parma would at once send an envoy, peace would, without question, soon be made.¹

Parma had expressed his gratification at these hopeful dispositions on the part of Burghley and Croft, and held out hopes of sending an agent to treat with them, if not directly with her Majesty. For some time past—according to the Prince—the English government had not seemed to be honestly seconding the Earl of Leicester, nor to correspond with his desires. “This makes me think,” he said, “that the counsellors before-mentioned, being his rivals, are trying to trip him up.”²

In such a caballing, prevaricating age, it is difficult to know which of all the plotters and counterplotters engaged in these intrigues could accomplish the greatest amount of what—for the sake of diluting in nine syllables that which could be more forcibly expressed in one—was then called diplomatic dissimulation. It is to be feared, notwithstanding her frequent and vociferous denials, that the robes of the “imperial votaress” were not so unsullied as could be wished. We know how loudly Leicester had complained—we have seen how clearly Walsingham could convict ; but Elizabeth, though convicted, could always confute : for an absolute sovereign, even without resorting to Philip’s syllogisms of axe and faggot, was apt in the sixteenth century to have the best of an argument with private individuals.

The secret statements of Parma—made, not for public effect, but for the purpose of furnishing his master with the most accurate information he could gather as to English policy—are certainly entitled to consideration. They were doubtless founded upon the statements of individuals rejoicing in no very elevated character ; but those individuals had no motive

¹ “*Emerando se mucho en excusar la Reyna assi de la yda de Drake a las Indias como de la venida de Leicester, echando la culpa a Walsingham y a otros mal intencionados, y que ya la*

Reyna comenzava a conocerlo,” &c. (Ibid.)

² “*Que estos, como sus contrarios, deven de yrle a la mano,” &c. (Ibid.)*

to deceive their patron. If they clashed with the vehement declarations of very eminent personages, it must be admitted, on the other hand, that they were singularly in accordance with the silent eloquence of important and mysterious events.

As to Alexander Farnese—without deciding the question whether Elizabeth and Burghley were deceiving Walsingham and Leicester, or only trying to delude Philip and himself—he had no hesitation, of course, on his part, in recommending to Philip the employment of unlimited dissimulation. Nothing could be more ingenuous than the intercourse between the King and his confidential advisers. It was perfectly understood among them that they were always to deceive every one, upon every occasion. Only let them be false, and it was impossible to be wholly wrong; but grave mistakes might occur from occasional deviations into sincerity. It was no question at all, therefore, that it was Parma's duty to delude Elizabeth and Burghley. Alexander's course was plain. He informed his master that he would keep these difficulties alive as much as it was possible. In order to "put them all to sleep with regard to the great enterprise of the invasion,"¹ he would send back Bodman to Burghley and Croft, and thus keep this unofficial negotiation upon its legs. The King was quite uncommitted, and could always disavow what had been done. Meanwhile he was gaining, and his adversaries losing, much precious time. "If by this course," said Parma, "we can induce the English to hand over to us the places which they hold in Holland and Zeeland, that will be a great triumph." Accordingly he urged the King not to slacken, in the least, his preparations for invasion, and, above all, to have a care that the French were kept entangled and embarrassed among themselves, which was a most substantial point.²

Meantime Europe was ringing with the American successes of the bold corsair Drake. San Domingo, Porto Rico, San-

¹ "Per endormecerlos por lo que toca al negocio principal." (Ibid.)

embaraçados entre se, que es punto sustancialissimo." (Ibid.)

² "Que los franceses se entretengan

tiago, Carthagena, Florida, were sacked and destroyed, and the supplies drawn so steadily from the oppression of the Western World to maintain Spanish tyranny in Europe, were for a time extinguished. Parma was appalled at these triumphs of the Sea-King—"a fearful man to the King of Spain"¹—as Lord Burghley well observed. The Spanish troops were starving in Flanders, all Flanders itself was starving, and Philip, as usual, had sent but insignificant remittances to save his perishing soldiers. Parma had already exhausted his credit. Money was most difficult to obtain in such a forlorn country; and now the few rich merchants and bankers of Antwerp that were left looked very black at these crushing news from America. "They are drawing their purse-strings very tight," said Alexander, "and will make no accommodation. The most contemplative of them ponder much over this success of Drake, and think that your Majesty will forget our matters here altogether."² For this reason he informed the King that it would be advisable to drop all further negotiation with England for the time, as it was hardly probable that, with such advantages gained by the Queen, she would be inclined to proceed in the path which had been just secretly opened.³ Moreover, the Prince was in a state of alarm as to the intentions of France. Mendoza and Tassis had given him to understand that a very good feeling prevailed between the court of Henry and of Elizabeth, and that the French were likely to come to a pacification among themselves.⁴ In this the Spanish envoys were hardly anticipating so great an effect as we have seen that they had the right to do from their own indefatigable exertions; for, thanks to their zeal, backed by the moderate subsidies furnished by their master, the civil war in France already seemed likely to be as enduring as that of the Netherlands. But Parma—still quite in the dark as to French politics—was haunted by the vision of seventy thousand foot and six thousand horse⁵ ready

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 199.
 31 March
 10 April 1586.

² Parma to Philip II. 9 May, 1586.
 (Arch. de Sim. MS.) ³ Ibid.
⁴ Ibid. ⁵ Ibid.

to be let slip upon him at any moment, out of a pacified and harmonious France; while he had nothing but a few starving and crippled regiments to withstand such an invasion. When all these events should have taken place, and France, in alliance with England, should have formally declared war against Spain, Alexander protested that he should have learned nothing new.¹

The Prince was somewhat mistaken as to political affairs; but his doubts concerning his neighbours, blended with the forlorn condition of himself and army, about which there was no doubt at all, showed the exigencies of his situation. In the midst of such embarrassments it is impossible not to admire his heroism as a military chieftain, and his singular adroitness as a diplomatist. He had painted for his sovereign a most faithful and horrible portrait of the obedient Provinces. The soil was untilled; the manufactories had all stopped; trade had ceased to exist. It was a pity only to look upon the raggedness of his soldiers. No language could describe the misery of the reconciled Provinces—Artois, Hainault, Flanders. The condition of Bruges would melt the hardest heart; other cities were no better; Antwerp was utterly ruined; its inhabitants were all starving. The famine throughout the obedient Netherlands was such as had not been known for a century. The whole country had been picked bare by the troops, and the plough was not put into the ground. Deputations were constantly with him from Bruges, Dendermonde, Bois-le-Duc, Brussels, Antwerp, Nymegen, proving to him by the most palpable evidence that the whole population of those cities had almost literally nothing to eat. He had nothing, however, but exhortations to patience to feed them withal. He was left without a groat even to save his soldiers from starving, and he wildly and bitterly, day after day, implored his sovereign for aid.² These pictures are not the sketches of a historian striving for effect, but literal transcripts from the most secret revelations of the Prince himself

¹ Parma to Philip II., MS. just cited. | April, 1586; 9 May, 1586; 27 May
² Letters of Parma to Philip II. 19 | 1586, *et al.* (Arch. de Sim. MSS.)

to his sovereign. On the other hand, although Leicester's complaints of the destitution of the English troops in the republic were almost as bitter, yet the condition of the United Provinces was comparatively healthy. Trade, external and internal, was increasing daily. Distant commercial and military expeditions were fitted out, manufactures were prosperous, and the war of independence was gradually becoming—strange to say—a source of prosperity to the new commonwealth.

Philip—being now less alarmed than his nephew concerning French affairs, and not feeling so keenly the misery of the obedient Provinces, or the wants of the Spanish army—sent to Alexander six hundred thousand ducats by way of Genoa. In the letter submitted by his secretary recording this remittance, the King made, however, a characteristic marginal note:—"See if it will not be as well to tell him something concerning the two hundred thousand ducats to be deducted for Mucio, for fear of more mischief, if the Prince should expect the whole six hundred thousand."¹

Accordingly Mucio got the two hundred thousand. One-third of the meagre supply destined for the relief of the King's starving and valiant little army in the Netherlands was cut off to go into the pockets of the intriguing Duke of Guise. "We must keep the French," said Philip, "in a state of confusion at home, and feed their civil war. We must not allow them to come to a general peace, which would be destruction for the Catholics. I know you will put a good face on the matter; and, after all, 'tis in the interest of the Netherlands. Moreover, the money shall be immediately refunded."²

Alexander was more likely to make a wry face, notwithstanding his views of the necessity of fomenting the rebellion

¹ "Mirad si es bien decirle algo de los 200^m ducados para Mucio, en caso que sean menester—porque despues no se haga mas de mal, esperando todos 600^m." Philip II. to Parma, 14 May, 1586. (Arch. de Sim. M.S.)

² "Sustentando los (franceses) el ruido en su casa, y no les dejando conseguir la paz general, que no ha de ser sino destruccion de los Catholicos," &c. (Ibid.)

against the House of Valois. Certainly if a monarch intended to conquer such countries as France, England, and Holland, without stirring from his easy chair in the Escorial, it would have been at least as well—so Alexander thought—to invest a little more capital in the speculation. No monarch ever dreamed of arriving at universal empire with less personal fatigue or exposure, or at a cheaper rate, than did Philip II. His only fatigue was at his writing-table. But even here his merit was of a subordinate description. He sat a great while at a time. He had a genius for sitting; but he now wrote few letters himself. A dozen words or so, scrawled in hieroglyphics at the top, bottom, or along the margin of the interminable despatches of his secretaries, contained the suggestions, more or less luminous, which arose in his mind concerning public affairs. But he held firmly to his purpose. He had devoted his life to the extermination of Protestantism, to the conquest of France and England, to the subjugation of Holland. These were vast schemes. A King who should succeed in such enterprises, by his personal courage and genius, at the head of his armies, or by consummate diplomacy, or by a masterly system of finance—husbanding and concentrating the resources of his almost boundless realms—might be in truth commended for capacity. Hitherto however Philip's triumph had seemed problematical; and perhaps something more would be necessary than letters to Parma, and paltry remittances to Mucio, notwithstanding Alexander's splendid but local victories in Flanders.

Parma, although in reality almost at bay, concealed his despair, and accomplished wonders in the field. The military events during the spring and summer of 1586 will be sketched in a subsequent chapter. For the present it is necessary to combine into a complete whole the subterranean negotiations between Brussels and England.

Much to his surprise and gratification, Parma found that the peace-party were not inclined to change their views in consequence of the triumphs of Drake. He soon informed the King that—according to Champagny and Bodman—the

Lord Treasurer, the Comptroller, Lord Cobham, and Sir Christopher Hatton, were more pacific than they had ever been. These four were represented by Grafigni as secretly in league against Leicester and Walsingham, and very anxious to bring about a reconciliation between the crowns of England and Spain.¹ The merchant-diplomatist, according to his own statement, was expressly sent by Queen Elizabeth to the Prince of Parma, although without letter of credence or signed instructions, but with the full knowledge and approbation of the four counsellors just mentioned. He assured Alexander that the Queen and the majority of her council felt a strong desire for peace, and had *manifested much repentance for what had been done*.² They had explained their proceedings by the necessity of self-defence. They had avowed—in case they should be made sure of peace—that they should, not with reluctance and against their will, but, on the contrary, with the utmost alacrity and at once, surrender to the King of Spain the territory which they possessed in the Netherlands, and especially the fortified towns in Holland and Zeeland;³ for the English object had never been conquest. Parma had also been informed of the Queen's strong desire that he should be employed as negotiator, on account of her great confidence in his sincerity. They had expressed much satisfaction on hearing that he was about to send an agent to England, and had protested themselves rejoiced at Drake's triumphs, only because of their hope that a peace with Spain would thus be rendered the easier of accomplishment. They were much afraid, according to Grafigni, of Philip's power, and dreaded a Spanish invasion of their country, in conjunction with the Pope. They were now extremely anxious that Parma—as he himself informed the King—should send an agent of good capacity, in great secrecy, to England.

¹ Parma to Philip II., 11 June, 1586. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

² "La inclinacion y deseo que tiene la Reyna y la mayor parte de su consejo de la paz, y de acomodarse con V. M., y del arrepentimiento que mues-

tran de lo hecho." (Ibid.)

³ "Antes, se allanaran en volver y entregar a V. M^d lo que ocupan y poseen y en particular las fuerzas de Holanda y Zeelanda," &c. (Ibid.)

The Comptroller had said that he had pledged himself to such a result, and if it failed, that they would probably cut off his head.¹ The four counsellors were excessively solicitous for the negotiation, and each of them was expecting to gain favour by advancing it to the best of his ability.

Parma hinted at the possibility that all these professions were false, and that the English were only intending to keep the King from the contemplated invasion. At the same time he drew Philip's attention to *the fact that Burghley and his party had most evidently been doing everything in their power to obstruct Leicester's progress in the Netherlands and to keep back the reinforcements of troops and money which he so much required.*²

No doubt these communications of Parma to the King were made upon the faith of an agent not over-scrupulous, and of no elevated or recognised rank in diplomacy. It must be borne in mind, however, that he had been made use of by both parties; perhaps because it would be easy to throw off, and discredit, him whenever such a step should be convenient; and that, on the other hand, coming fresh from Burghley and the rest into the presence of the keen-eyed Farnese, he would hardly invent for his employer a budget of falsehoods. That man must have been a subtle negotiator who could outwit such a statesman as Burghley and the other counsellors of Elizabeth, and a bold one who could dare to trifle on a momentous occasion with Alexander of Parma.

Leicester thought Burghley very much his friend, and so thought Davison and Heneage; and the Lord-Treasurer had, in truth, stood stoutly by the Earl in the affair of the absolute governorship;—"a matter more severe and cumbersome to him and others," said Burghley, "than any whatsoever since he was a counsellor."³ But there is no doubt that these negotiations were going forward all the spring and summer, that they were most detrimental to Leicester's success, and that they were kept—so far as it was possible—a profound

¹ "Que le corten la cabeza." Parma to Philip II., MS. just cited.

² *Ibid.*

³ 'Leyc. Corresp., 268, ¹⁵/₂₃ May, 1586.

secret from him, from Walsingham, and from the States-General. Nothing was told them except what their own astuteness had discovered beforehand ; and the game of the counsellors—so far as their attitude towards Leicester and Walsingham was concerned—seems both disingenuous and impolitic.

Parma, it was to be feared, was more than a match for the English governor-general in the field ; and it was certainly hopeless for poor old Comptroller Croft, even though backed by the sagacious Burghley, to accomplish so great an amount of dissimulation in a year as the Spanish cabinet, without effort, could compass in a week. Nor were they attempting to do so. It is probable that England was acting towards Philip in much better faith than he deserved, or than Parma believed ; but it is hardly to be wondered at that Leicester should think himself injured by being kept perpetually in the dark.

Elizabeth was very impatient at not receiving direct letters from Parma, and her anxiety on the subject explains much of her caprice during the quarrel about the governor-generalship. Many persons in the Netherlands thought those violent scenes a farce, and a farce that had been arranged with Leicester beforehand. In this they were mistaken ; for an examination of the secret correspondence of the period reveals the motives—which to contemporaries were hidden—of many strange transactions. The Queen was, no doubt, extremely anxious, and with cause, at the tempest slowly gathering over her head ; but the more the dangers thickened, the more was her own official language to those in high places befitting the sovereign of England.

She expressed her surprise to Farnese that he had not written to her on the subject of the Grafigni and Bodman affair. The first, she said, was justified in all which he had narrated, save in his assertion that she had sent him. The other had not obtained audience, because he had not come provided with any credentials, direct or indirect. Having now understood from Andrea de Loo and the Seigneur de Cham-

pagny that Parma had the power to conclude a peace, which he seemed very much to desire, she observed that it was not necessary for him to be so chary in explaining the basis of the proposed negotiations. It was better to enter into a straightforward path, than by ambiguous words to spin out to great length matters which princes should at once conclude.¹

"Do not suppose," said the Queen, "that I am seeking what belongs to others. God forbid. I seek only that which is mine own. But be sure that I will take good heed of the sword which threatens me with destruction, nor think that I am so craven-spirited as to endure a wrong, or to place myself at the mercy of my enemy. Every week I see advertisements and letters from Spain that this year shall witness the downfall of England; for the Spaniards—like the hunter who divided, with great liberality, among his friends the body and limbs of the wolf, before it had been killed—have partitioned this kingdom and that of Ireland before the conquest has been effected. But my royal heart is no whit appalled by such threats.² I trust, with the help of the Divine hand—which has thus far miraculously preserved me—to smite all these braggart powers into the dust, and to preserve my honour, and the kingdoms which He has given me for my heritage.

"Nevertheless, if you have authority to enter upon and to conclude this negotiation, you will find my ears open to hear your propositions; and I tell you further, if a peace is to be made, that I wish you to be the mediator thereof. Such is the affection I bear you, notwithstanding that some letters, written by your own hand, might easily have effaced such sentiments from my mind."³

Soon afterwards, Bodman was again despatched to England, Grafigni being already there. He was provided with unsigned instructions, according to which he was to say that the Prince, having heard of the Queen's good intentions, had

¹ Queen Elizabeth to Prince of Parma, without date. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

² "Non resta che'l mi curare regale sia punto sbigottito da queste minaccie," &c. (Ibid.)

³ Ibid.

despatched him and Grafigni to her court. They were to listen to any suggestions made by the Queen to her ministers ; but they were to do nothing but listen. If the counsellors should enter into their grievances against his Majesty, and ask for explanations, the agents were to say that they had no authority or instructions to speak for so great and Christian a monarch. Thus they were to cut the thread of any such discourse, or any other observations not to the purpose.¹

Silence, in short, was recommended, first and last, as the one great business of their mission ; and it was unlucky that men whose talent for taciturnity was thus signally relied upon should be somewhat remarkable for loquacity. Grafigni was also the bearer of a letter from Alexander to the Queen—of which Bodman received a copy—but it was strictly enjoined upon them to keep the letter, their instructions, and the objects of their journey, a secret from all the world.²

The letter of the Prince consisted mainly of complimentary flourishes. He had heard, he said, all that Agostino Grafigni had communicated, and he now begged her Majesty to let him understand the course which it was proper to take ; assuring her of his gratitude for her good opinion touching his sincerity, and his desire to save the effusion of blood, and so on ; concluding of course with expressions of most profound consideration and devotion.³

Early in July Bodman arrived in London. He found Grafigni in very low spirits. He had been with Lord Cobham, and was much disappointed with his reception, for Cobham—angry that Grafigni had brought no commission from the King—had refused to receive Parma's letter to the Queen, and had expressed annoyance that Bodman should be employed on this mission, having heard that he was very ill-tempered and passionate. The same evening, he had been sent for by

¹ Instruzione embiada á Gulielmo Bodeman, 20 June, 1586. (Arch. de Sim. MS.) "Cortando el hilo a la plática y discursos como a todos los demas

que no hacen a proposito," &c.

² Ibid.

³ Parma to Queen Elizabeth, 20 June, 1586. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

Lord Burghley—who had accepted the letter for her Majesty without saying a word—and on the following morning, he had been taken to task by several counsellors, on the ground that the Prince, in that communication, had stated that the Queen had expressed a desire for peace.¹

It has just been shown that there was no such intimation at all in the letter ; but as neither Grafigni nor Bodman had read the epistle itself, but only the copy furnished them, they could merely say that such an assertion, if made by the Prince, had been founded on no statement of theirs. Bodman consoled his colleague, as well as he could, by assurances that when the letter was fairly produced, their vindication would be complete, and Grafigni, upon that point, was comforted. He was, however, very doleful in general, and complained bitterly of Burghley and the other English counsellors. He said that they had forced him, against his will, to make this journey to Brussels, that they had offered him presents, that they would leave him no rest in his own house, but had made him neglect all his private business, and caused him a great loss of time and money, in order that he might serve them. They had manifested the strongest desire that Parma should open this communication, and had led him to expect a very large recompense for his share in the transaction. "And now," said Grafigni to his colleague, with great bitterness, "I find no faith nor honour in them at all. They don't keep their word, and every one of them is trying to slide out of the very business, in which each was, but the other day, striving to outrival the other, in order that it might be brought to a satisfactory conclusion."²

After exploding in this way to Bodman, he went back to Cobham, and protested, with angry vehemence, that Parma had never written such a word to the Queen, and that so it would prove, if the letter were produced.

¹ 'Relacion de lo sucedido en Inglaterra a G. Bodeman con los señores de aquel consejo,' &c., 30 July, 1586.

² Ibid. "No hallaba fé, palabra, ni

honra entre ellos, porque cada uno queria salirse afuera que de antes estaban quien primero lo podria acabar." (Ibid.)

Next day, Bodman was sent for to Greenwich, where her Majesty was, as usual, residing. A secret pavilion was indicated to him, where he was to stay until sunset. When that time arrived, Lord Cobham's secretary came with great mystery, and begged the emissary to follow him, but at a considerable distance, towards the apartments of Lord Burghley in the palace. Arriving there, they found the Lord-Treasurer accompanied by Cobham and Croft. Burghley instantly opened the interview by a defence of the Queen's policy in sending troops to the Netherlands, and in espousing their cause, and then the conversation proceeded to the immediate matter in hand.¹

Bodman (after listening respectfully to the Lord-Treasurer's observations). "His Highness has, however, been extremely surprised that my Lord Leicester should take an oath, as governor-general of the King's Provinces. He is shocked likewise by the great demonstrations of hostility on the part of her Majesty."

Burghley.—"The oath was indispensable. The Queen was obliged to tolerate the step on account of the great urgency of the States to have a head. But her Majesty has commanded us to meet you on this occasion, in order to hear what you have to communicate on the part of the Prince of Parma."

Bodman (after a profusion of complimentary phrases). "I have no commission to say anything. I am only instructed to listen to anything that may be said to me, and that her Majesty may be pleased to command."

Burghley.—"'Tis very discreet to begin thus. But time is pressing, and it is necessary to be brief. We beg you therefore to communicate, without further preface, that which you have been charged to say."

Bodman.—"I can only repeat to your Lordship, that I have been charged to say nothing."

After this Barmecide feast of diplomacy, to partake of which it seemed hardly necessary that the guests should have

¹ 'Relacion de lo sucedido,' &c. (Arch. de Sim. MS. last cited.)

previously attired themselves in such garments of mystery, the parties separated for the night.¹

In spite of their care, it would seem that the Argus-eyed Walsingham had been able to see after sunset; for, the next evening—after Bodman had been introduced with the same precautions to the same company, in the same place—Burghley, before a word had been spoken, sent for Sir Francis.²

Bodman was profoundly astonished, for he had been expressly informed that Walsingham was to know nothing of the transaction.³ The Secretary of State could not so easily be outwitted, however, and he was soon seated at the table, surveying the scene, with his grave melancholy eyes, which had looked quite through the whole paltry intrigue.

Burghley.—“Her Majesty has commanded us to assemble together, in order that, in my presence, it may be made clear that she did not commence this negotiation. Let Grafigni be summoned.”

Grafigni immediately made his appearance.

Burghley.—“You will please to explain how you came to enter into this business.”

Grafigni.—“The first time I went to the States, it was on my private affairs; I had no order from any one to treat with the Prince of Parma. His Highness, having accidentally heard, however, that I resided in England, expressed a wish to see me. I had an interview with the Prince. I told him, out of my own head, that the Queen had a strong inclination to hear propositions of peace, and that—as some of her counsellors were of the same opinion—I believed that if his Highness should send a negotiator, some good would be effected. The Prince replied that he felt by no means sure of such a result; but that, if I should come back from England, sent by the Queen or her council, he would then despatch a person with a commission to treat of peace. This statement, together with other matters that had passed

¹ ‘Relacion de lo sucedido,’ &c. MS. last cited.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

between us, was afterwards drawn up in writing by command of his Highness."

Burghley.—"Who bade you say, after your second return to Brussels, that you came on the part of the Queen? For you well know that her Majesty did not send you."

Grafigni.—"I never said so. I stated that my Lord Cobham had set down in writing what I was to say to the Prince of Parma. It will never appear that I represented the Queen as desiring peace. I said that her Majesty *would lend her ears to peace*. Bodman knows this too; and he has a copy of the letter of his Highness."

Walsingham to Bodman.—"Have you the copy still?"

Bodman.—"Yes, Mr. Secretary."

Walsingham.—"Please to produce it, in order that this matter may be sifted to the bottom."

Bodman.—"I supplicate your Lorships to pardon me, but indeed that cannot be. My instructions forbid my showing the letter."

Walsingham (rising). "I will forthwith go to her Majesty, and fetch the original." A pause. Mr. Secretary returns in a few minutes, having obtained the document, which the Queen, up to that time, had kept by her, without showing it to any one.¹

Walsingham (after reading the letter attentively, and aloud). "There is not such a word, as that her Majesty is desirous of peace, in the whole paper."²

Burghley (taking the letter, and slowly construing it out of Italian into English). "It would seem that his Highness hath written this, assuming that the Signor Grafigni came from the Queen, although he had received his instructions from my Lord Cobham. It is plain, however, that the negotiation was commenced accidentally.

Comptroller Croft (nervously, and with the air of a man fearful of getting into trouble). "You know very well, Mr. Bodman, that my servant came to Dunkirk only to buy and

¹ 'Relacion de lo sucedido,' &c. MS. before cited. | 'Leyc. Corresp.' 321, ³⁴ June, 1586;

² 'Relacion,' &c. Compare Bruce's | and 327, ³⁰ June, ¹⁰ July, 1586.

truck away horses; and that you then, by chance, entered into talk with him, about the best means of procuring a peace between the two kingdoms. My servant told you of the good feeling that prevailed in England. You promised to write on the subject to the Prince, and I immediately informed the Lord-Treasurer of the whole transaction."¹

Burghley.—“That is quite true.”

Croft.—“My servant subsequently returned to the Provinces in order to learn what the Prince might have said on the subject.”

Bodman (with immense politeness,² but very decidedly). “Pardon me, Mr. Comptroller; but, in this matter, I must speak the truth, even if the honour and life of my father were on the issue. I declare that your servant Norris came to me, directly commissioned for that purpose by yourself, and informed me from you, and upon your authority, that if I would solicit the Prince of Parma to send a secret agent to England, a peace would be at once negotiated. Your servant entreated me to go to his Highness at Brussels. I refused, but agreed to consider the proposition. After the lapse of several days, the servant returned to make further enquiries. I told him that the Prince had come to no decision. Norris continued to press the matter. I excused myself. He then solicited and obtained from me a letter of introduction to De Loo, the secretary of his Highness. Armed with this, he went to Brussels and had an interview—as I found, four days later—with the Prince. In consequence of the representations of Norris, those of Signor Grafigni, and those by way of Antwerp, his Highness determined to send me to England.”

Burghley to Croft.—“Did you order your servant to speak with Andrea de Loo?”

Croft.—“I cannot deny it.”

Burghley.—“The fellow³ seems to have travelled a good way out of his commission. His master sends him to buy horses, and he commences a peace-negotiation between two kingdoms. It would be well he were chastised. As regards the Antwerp

¹ ‘Relacion,’ &c. MS.

² “Con buena crianza,” &c. ‘Relacion,’ &c. MS.

³ “Mozo.” (Ibid.)

matter, too, we have had many letters, and I have seen one from the Seigneur de Champagne, to the same effect as that of all the rest.

Walsingham.—“I see not to what end his Highness of Parma has sent Mr. Bodman hither. The Prince avows that he hath no commission from Spain.”

Bodman.—“His Highness was anxious to know what was her Majesty’s pleasure. So soon as that should be known, the Prince could obtain ample authority. He would never have proceeded so far without meaning a good end.”

Walsingham.—“Very like. I dare say that his Highness will obtain the commission. Meantime, as Prince of Parma, he writes these letters, and assists his sovereign perhaps more than he doth ourselves.”

Here the interview terminated. A few days later, Bodman had another conversation with Burghley and Cobham. Reluctantly, at their urgent request, he set down in 14th July, writing all that he had said concerning his mission. 1586.

The Lord Treasurer said that the Queen and her counsellors were “ready to embrace peace when it was treated of sincerely.” Meantime the Queen had learned that the Prince had been sending letters to the cautionary towns in Holland and Zeeland, stating that her Majesty was about to surrender them to the King of Spain. These were tricks to make mischief, and were very detrimental to the Queen.

Bodman replied that these were merely the idle stories of quidnuncs ; and that the Prince and all his counsellors were dealing with the utmost sincerity.

Burghley answered that he had intercepted the very letters, and had them in his possession.

A week afterwards, Bodman saw Walsingham alone, and was informed by him that the Queen had written an an- 20th July, swer to Parma’s letter, and that negotiations for the 1586. future were to be carried on in the usual form, or not at all. Walsingham, having thus got the better of his rivals, and delved below their mines, dismissed the agent with brief courtesy. Afterwards the discomfited Mr. Comptroller wished a private inter-

view with Bodman. Bodman refused to speak with him except in presence of Lord Cobham. This Croft refused. In the same way Bodman contrived to get rid, as he said, of Lord Burghley and Lord Cobham, declining to speak with either of them alone. Soon afterwards he returned to the Provinces.¹

The Queen's letter to Parma was somewhat caustic. It was obviously composed through the inspiration of Walsingham rather than that of Burghley. The letter, brought by a certain Grafigni and a certain Bodman, she said, was a very strange one, and written under a delusion. It was a very grave error, that, in her name, without her knowledge, contrary to her disposition, and to the prejudice of her honour, such a person as this Grafigni, or any one like him, should have the audacity to commence such a business, as if she had, by messages to the Prince, sought a treaty with his King, who had so often returned evil for her good. Grafigni, after representing the contrary to his Highness, had now denied in presence of her counsellors having received any commission from the Queen. She also briefly gave the result of Bodman's interviews with Burghley and the others, just narrated. That agent had intimated that Parma would procure authority to treat for peace, if assured that the Queen would lend her ear to any propositions.

She replied by referring to her published declarations, as showing her powerful motives for interfering in these affairs. It was her purpose to save her own realm and to rescue her ancient neighbours from misery and from slavery. To this end she should still direct her actions, notwithstanding the sinister rumours which had been spread that she was inclined to peace before providing for the security and liberty of her allies. She was determined never to separate their cause from her own. Propositions tending to the security of herself and of her neighbours would always be favourably received.²

¹ 'Relacion de lo sucedido,' &c. MS. A similar account, with less detail, of these secret proceedings is in the State Paper Office, in the Holland Correspondence, entitled 'A declaration of the manner of treating of peace underhand to the Earl of Leicester.'

MS. A° 1586.

² 'Carta descifrada de la Reyna de Inglaterra a Principe de Parma, 8 July, 1586. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

A copy is also—written in the Italian language—in the S. P. Office, Flanders Correspondence, MS.

Parma, on his part, informed his master that there could be no doubt that the Queen and the majority of her council abhorred the war, and that already much had been gained by the fictitious negotiation. Lord-Treasurer Burghley had been interposing endless delays and difficulties in the way of every measure proposed for the relief of Lord Leicester, and the assistance rendered him had been most lukewarm. Meantime the Prince had been able, he said, to achieve much success in the field, and the English had done nothing to prevent it. Since the return of Grafigni and Bodman, however, it was obvious that the English government had disowned these non-commissioned diplomatists. The whole negotiation and all the negotiators were now discredited, but there was no doubt 4 Aug.
1586. that there had been a strong desire to treat, and great disappointment at the result. Grafigni and Andrea de Loo had been publishing everywhere in Antwerp that England would consider the peace as made, so soon as his Majesty should be willing to accept any propositions.¹

His Majesty, meanwhile, sat in his cabinet, without the slightest intention of making or accepting any propositions save those that were impossible. He smiled benignantly at his nephew's dissimulation and at the good results which it had already produced. He approved of gaining time, he said, by fictitious negotiations and by the use of a mercantile agent; for, no doubt, such a course would prevent the proper succours from being sent to the Earl of Leicester. If the English would hand over to him the cautionary towns held by them in Holland and Zeeland, promise no longer to infest the seas, the Indies, and the Isles, with their corsairs, and guarantee the complete obedience to their King and submission to the holy Catholic Church of the rebellious Provinces, perhaps something might be done with them; but, on the whole, he was inclined to think that they had been influenced by knavish and deceitful motives from the beginning. He enjoined it 18 Sept.
1586. upon Parma, therefore, to proceed with equal knavery —taking care, however, not to injure his reputation and to enter into negotiations wherever occasion might serve, in order

¹ Parma to Philip II. 4 Aug. 1586. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

to put the English off their guard and to keep back the reinforcements so imperatively required by Leicester.¹

And the reinforcements were indeed kept back. Had Burghley and Croft been in the pay of Philip II. they could hardly have served him better than they had been doing by the course pursued. Here then is the explanation of the shortcomings of the English government towards Leicester and the States during the memorable spring and summer of 1586. No money, no soldiers, when most important operations in the field were required. The first general of the age was to be opposed by a man who had certainly never gained many laurels as a military chieftain, but who was brave and confident, and who, had he been faithfully supported by the government which sent him to the Netherlands, would have had his antagonist at a great disadvantage. Alexander had scarcely eight thousand effective men. Famine, pestilence, poverty, mutiny, beset and almost paralyzed him. Language could not exaggerate the absolute destitution of the country. Only miracles could save the King's cause, as Farnese repeatedly observed. A sharp vigorous campaign, heartily carried on against him by Leicester and Hohenlo, with plenty of troops and money at command, would have brought the heroic champion of Catholicism to the ground. He was hemmed in upon all sides; he was cut off from the sea; he stood as it were in a narrowing circle, surrounded by increasing dangers. His own veterans, maddened by misery, stung by their King's ingratitude, naked, starving, ferocious, were turning against him. Mucio, like his evil genius, was spiriting away his supplies just as they were reaching his hands; a threatening tempest seemed rolling up from France; the whole population of the Provinces which he had "reconciled"—a million of paupers—were crying to him for bread; great commercial cities, suddenly blasted and converted into dens of thieves and beggars, were cursing the royal author of their ruin, and uttering wild threats against his vicegerent; there seemed, in truth, nothing left for Alexander but to plunge headlong into destruction, when, lo! Mr. Comptroller Croft,

¹ Philip II. to Parma, 18 July, 1586. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

advancing out of the clouds, like a propitious divinity, disguised in the garb of a foe—and the scene was changed.

The feeble old man, with his shuffling, horse-trucking servant, ex-spy of Monsieur, had accomplished more work for Philip and Alexander than many regiments of Spaniards and Walloons could have done. The arm of Leicester was paralyzed upon the very threshold of success. The picture of these palace-intrigues has been presented with minute elaboration, because, however petty and barren in appearance, they were in reality prolific of grave results. A series of victories by Parma was substituted for the possible triumphs of Elizabeth and the States.

The dissimulation of the Spanish court was fathomless. The secret correspondence of the times reveals to us that its only purpose was to deceive the Queen and her counsellors, and to gain time to prepare the grand invasion of England and subjugation of Holland—that double purpose which Philip could only abandon with life. There was never a thought, on his part, of honest negotiation. On the other hand, the Queen was sincere; Burghley and Hatton and Cobham were sincere; Croft was sincere, so far as Spain was concerned. At least they had been sincere. In the private and doleful dialogues between Bodman and Grafigni which we have just been overhearing, these intriguers spoke the truth, for they could have no wish to deceive each other, and no fear of eaves-droppers not to be born till centuries afterwards. These conversations have revealed to us that the Lord Treasurer and three of his colleagues had been secretly doing their best to cripple Leicester, to stop the supplies for the Netherlands, and to patch up a hurried and unsatisfactory, if not a disgraceful peace; and this, with the concurrence of her Majesty. After their plots had been discovered by the vigilant Secretary of State, there was a disposition to discredit the humbler instruments in the cabal. Elizabeth was not desirous of peace. Far from it. She was qualmish at the very suggestion. Dire was her wrath against Bodman, De Loo, Grafigni, and the rest, at their misrepresentations on the subject. But she would “lend her ear.” And that royal ear was

lent, and almost fatal was the distilment poured into its porches. The pith and marrow of the great Netherland enterprise was sapped by the slow poison of the ill-timed negotiation. The fruit of Drake's splendid triumphs in America was blighted by it. The stout heart of the vain-glorious but courageous Leicester was sickened by it, while, meantime, the maturing of the great armada-scheme, by which the destruction of England was to be accomplished, was furthered, through the unlimited procrastination so precious to the heart of Philip.

Fortunately the subtle Walsingham was there upon the watch to administer the remedy before it was quite too late; and to him England and the Netherlands were under lasting obligations. While Alexander and Philip suspected a purpose on the part of the English government to deceive them, they could not help observing that the Earl of Leicester was both deserted and deceived. Yet it had been impossible for the peace-party in the government wholly to conceal their designs, when such prating fellows as Grafigni and De Loo were employed in what was intended to be a secret negotiation. In vain did the friends of Leicester in the Netherlands endeavour to account for the neglect with which he was treated, and for the destitution of his army. Hopelessly did they attempt to counteract those "advertisements of most fearful instance," as Richard Cavendish expressed himself, which were circulating everywhere.¹

Thanks to the babbling of the very men, whose chief instructions had been to hold their tongues, and to listen with all their ears, the secret negotiations between Parma and the English counsellors became the town-talk at Antwerp, the Hague, Amsterdam, Brussels, London. It is true that it was

¹ Cavendish to Burghley, 18 March, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

"Champagny doth not spare most liberally to bruit abroad," said Cavendish, "that he hath in his hands the conditions of peace offered by her Majesty unto the King his master, and that it is in his power to conclude at pleasure, wherein he affirmeth that one or two of the chiefest counsellors about her are to handle the cause

with him. This fearful and mischievous plot cannot but prove the root of great ruin; for this people, beaten with tedious, long, and sharp miseries, is made wonderful provident and suspicious: saying, *that, if they would suffer the Spanish yoke anew, they need no mediator, for they can easily conclude for themselves, how, with least mischief, to become miserable again.*

impossible to know what was actually said and done; but that there was something doing concerning which Leicester was not to be informed was certain. Grafigni, during one of his visits to the obedient provinces, brought a brace of greyhounds and a couple of horses from England, as a present to Alexander,¹ and he perpetually went about, bragging to every one of important negotiations which he was conducting, and of his intimacy with great personages in both countries. Leicester, on the other hand, was kept in the dark. To him Grafigni made no communications, but he once sent him a dish of plums, "which," said the Earl, with superfluous energy, "I will boldly say to you, by the living God, is all that I have ever had since I came into these countries."² When it is remembered that Leicester had spent many thousand pounds in the Netherland cause,³ that he had deeply mortgaged his property in order to provide more funds, that he had never received a penny of salary from the Queen,⁴ that his soldiers

¹ 'Leyc. Corresp.' 289, $\frac{6}{16}$ June, 1586.

² Ibid. 246, $\frac{28}{8}$ April May, 1586.

³ "I myself have prested," wrote the Earl to Burghley, "above 3000*l*. among our men here since I came, and yet what need they be in, even when there is most need of service, all the world here doth see. Here hath been as lewd and dangerous mutinies as I cannot but grieve to think on it." &c. March 29, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ On the 14 May, 1586, the States General resolved, in consequence of repeated applications on behalf of Leicester, for money for his own personal expenses by way of salary, that although the Queen had expressly agreed, by the contract with the States, to pay the salary of the governor-general and other military chiefs, they would themselves very willingly provide for his salary and maintenance, according to his petition. They previously requested Mr. Killigrew, however, to furnish them information as to how much monthly allowance her Majesty was then paying the lieutenant-general.

On the 16 May, 1586, the committee of the States appointed to confer with Mr. Killigrew concerning the amount of monthly allowance paid to the Earl of Leicester, reported that Mr. Killi-

grew had openly and roundly declared that his Excellency, up to that hour, had never received one stiver of salary, and that his Excellency had told him so, on the word of a prince. "De zelve Heere Killigrew hen opentlyk ende rondelyk heeft vercleert dat Zyne Ex^{ce} tot op deze ure toe nyet eenen styver voor tractement hadde ontfangen van heere Ma^t, ende dat dezelve Zyne Ex^{ce} hem hadde geseyt en parole de prince, dat van zyn tractement by heere Ma^t. nyet een woort was gesproken." Resolutien van de Staten-general, a^o 1586. Hague Archives MS.

It was subsequently voted by the States General (4 July, 1586) that the Earl should receive a salary of 60,000 florins yearly to be drawn from the general duties upon cloth; and that in case her Majesty should continue in her refusal to contribute to his salary, the annual allowance furnished by the States should be increased to 100,000 florins.

Ten thousand pounds sterling a year in the sixteenth century was certainly a princely salary, and it was hardly becoming in the Queen, who refused to pay her own favourite "a stiver," to censure any shortcomings of the States, who proved themselves so much more liberal than herself. 'Resolution,' &c. *ubi sup.*

were "ragged and torn like rogues—pity to see them,"¹ and were left without the means of supporting life ; that he had been neglected, deceived, humiliated, until he was forced to describe himself as a "forlorn man set upon a forlorn hope,"² it must be conceded that Grafigni's present of a dish of plums could hardly be sufficient to make him very happy.

From time to time he was enlightened by Sir Francis, who occasionally forced his adversaries' hands, and who always faithfully informed the Earl of everything he could discover. "We are so greedy of a peace, in respect of the charges of the wars," he wrote in April, "as in the procuring thereof we weigh neither honour nor safety. Somewhat here is a dealing underhand, wherein there is great care taken that I should not be made acquainted withal."³ But with all their great care, the conspirators, as it has been seen, were sometimes outwitted by the Secretary, and, when put to the blush, were forced to take him into half-confidence. "Your Lordship may see," he wrote, after getting possession of Parma's letter to the Queen, and unravelling Croft's intrigues, "what effects are wrought by such weak ministers. *They that have been the employers of them are ashamed of the matter.*"⁴

Unutterable was the amazement, as we have seen, of Bodman and Grafigni when they had suddenly found themselves confronted in Burghley's private apartments in Greenwich Palace, whither they had been conducted so mysteriously after dark from the secret pavilion—by the grave Secretary of State, whom they had been so anxious to deceive ; and great was the embarrassment of Croft and Cobham, and even of the imperturbable Burghley.

And thus patiently did Walsingham pick his course, plummet in hand, through the mists and along the quicksands, and faithfully did he hold out signals to his comrade embarked on the same dangerous voyage. As for the Earl himself, he was shocked at the short-sighted policy of his mistress, mortified by the neglect to which he was exposed, disappointed in his ambitious schemes. Vehemently and

¹ Leyc. Corresp.' 285, ^{31 May}/_{10 June}, 1586.

² Ibid. 223, ¹¹/₂₁ April, 1586.

³ Ibid. 290, ⁶/₁₆ June, 1586.

⁴ Ibid. 321, ^{24 June}/_{16 July}, 1586.

judiciously he insisted upon the necessity of vigorous field-operations throughout the spring and summer thus frittered away in frivolous negotiations. He was for peace, if a lasting and honourable peace could be procured ; but he insisted that the only road to such a result was through a "good sharp war."¹ His troops were mutinous for want of pay, so that he had been obliged to have a few of them executed, although he protested that he would rather have "gone a thousand miles a-foot"² than have done so ; and he was crippled by his government at exactly the time when his great adversary's condition was most forlorn. Was it strange that the proud Earl should be fretting his heart away when such golden chances were eluding his grasp ? He would "creep upon the ground," he said, "as far as his hands and knees would carry him, to have a good peace for her Majesty, but his care was to have a peace indeed, and not a show of it."³ It was the cue of Holland and England to fight before they could expect to deal upon favourable terms with their enemy. He was quick enough to see that his false colleagues at home were playing into the enemy's hands. Victory was what was wanted ; victory the Earl pledged himself, if properly seconded, to obtain ; and, braggart though he was, it is by no means impossible that he might have redeemed his pledge. "If her Majesty will use her advantage," he said, "she shall bring the King, and especially this Prince of Parma, to seek peace in other sort than by way of merchants."⁴ Of courage and confidence the governor had no lack. Whether he was capable of outgeneralling Alexander Farnese or no, will be better seen, perhaps, in subsequent chapters ; but there is no doubt that he was reasonable enough in thinking, at that juncture, that a hard campaign rather than a "merchant's brokerage"⁵ was required to obtain an honourable peace. Lofty, indeed, was the scorn of the aristocratic Leicester that "merchants and pedlars should be paltering in so weighty a cause,"⁶ and

¹ 'Leyc. Corresp.' 254, ^{30 April}_{10 May}, 1586.

² Leicester to Burghley, 29 March, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ 'Leyc. Corresp.' 253, ^{20 April}_{10 May}, 1586.

⁴ Ibid. 251, same date.

⁵ Ibid. 247, ^{28 April}_{8 May}, 1586.

⁶ Ibid. 254, ^{30 April}_{10 May}, 1586

daring to send him a dish of plums when he was hoping half a dozen regiments from the Queen ; and a sorry business, in truth, the pedlars had made of it.

Never had there been a more delusive diplomacy, and it was natural that the lieutenant-general abroad and the statesman at home should be sad and indignant, seeing England drifting to utter shipwreck while pursuing that phantom of a pacific haven. Had Walsingham and himself tampered with the enemy, as some counsellors he could name had done, Leicester asserted that the gallows would be thought too good for them ;¹ and yet he hoped he might be hanged if the whole Spanish faction in England could procure for the Queen a peace fit for her to accept.²

Certainly it was quite impossible for the Spanish faction to bring about a peace. No human power could bring it about. Even if England had been willing and able to surrender Holland, bound hand and foot, to Philip, even then she could only have obtained a hollow armistice. Philip had sworn in his inmost soul the conquest of England and the dethronement of Elizabeth. His heart was fixed. It was only by the subjugation of England that he hoped to recover the Netherlands. England was to be his stepping-stone to Holland. The invasion was slowly but steadily maturing, and nothing could have diverted the King from his great purpose. In the very midst of all these plots and counterplots, Bodmans and Grafignis, English geldings and Irish greyhounds, dishes of plums and autograph letters of her Majesty and his Highness, the Prince was deliberately discussing all the details of the invasion, which, as it was then hoped, would be ready by the autumn of the year 1586. Although he had sent a special agent to Philip, who was to state by word of mouth that which it was deemed unsafe to write,³ yet Alexander, perpetually urged by his master, went at last more fully into particulars than he had ever ventured to do before ; and this too at the very moment when Elizabeth was most seriously "lending her ear" to

¹ 'Leyc. Corresp,' 254.

² Ibid.

³ Parma to Philip II., 20 April, 1586. (Arch. de Sim. MS.) Also a

paper epigraphed—'Lo que dijo J. B. Piata (the agent alluded to in the text) a Don Juan de Idiaquez, 24 June, 1586.' (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

negotiation, and most vehemently expressing her wrath at Sir Thomas Heneage for dealing candidly with the States-General.¹

The Prince observed that when, two or three years before, he had sent his master an account of the coasts, anchoring-places, and harbours of England, he had then expressed the opinion that the conquest of England was an enterprise worthy of the grandeur and Christianity of his Majesty, and not so difficult as to be considered altogether impossible. To make himself absolutely master of the business, however, he had then thought that the King should have no associates in the scheme, and should make no account of the inhabitants of England.² Since that time the project had become more difficult of accomplishment, because it was now a stale and common topic of conversation everywhere—in Italy, Germany, and France—so that there could be little doubt that rumours on the subject were daily reaching the ears of Queen Elizabeth and of every one in her kingdom. Hence she had made a strict alliance with Sweden, Denmark, the Protestant princes of Germany, and even with the Turks and the French. Nevertheless, in spite of these obstacles, the King, placing his royal hand to the work, might well accomplish the task; for the favour of the Lord, whose cause it was, would be sure to give him success.

Being so Christian and Catholic a king, Philip naturally desired to extend the area of the holy church, and to come to the relief of so many poor innocent martyrs in England, crying aloud before the Lord for help.³ Moreover Elizabeth had fomented rebellion in the King's Provinces for a long time secretly, and now, since the fall of Antwerp, and just as Holland and Zeeland were falling into his grasp, openly.

Thus, in secret and in public, she had done the very worst she could do; and it was very clear that the Lord, for her sins, had deprived her of understanding,⁴ in order that his Majesty might be the instrument of that chastisement which she so fully deserved. A monarch of such great prudence, valour, and talent as Philip, could now give all the world to

¹ MS. Letter of Parma to Philip, 20 April, 1586, before cited.

² "No haciendo caso de los proprios del pais." (Ibid.)

³ "Tantos pobres y inocentes y mar-

tires qui sean esclamando delante del divino conspecto," &c. (Ibid.)

⁴ "Que nuestro Señor por sus pecados le ha quitado de todo punto el entendimiento." (Ibid.)

understand that those who dared to lose a just and decorous respect for him, as this good lady had done, would receive such chastisement as royal power guided by prudent counsel could inflict.¹ Parma assured his sovereign, that, if the conquest of England were effected, that of the Netherlands would be finished with much facility and brevity; but that otherwise, on account of the situation, strength and obstinacy of those people, it would be a very long, perilous, and at best doubtful business.²

"Three points," he said, "were most vital to the invasion of England—secrecy, maintenance of the civil war in France, and judicious arrangement of matters in the Provinces."

The French, if unoccupied at home, would be sure to make the enterprise so dangerous as to become almost impossible; for it might be laid down as a general maxim that that nation, jealous of Philip's power, had always done and would always do what it could to counteract his purposes.

With regard to the Netherlands, it would be desirable to leave a good number of troops in those countries—at least as many as were then stationed there—besides the garrisons, and also to hold many German and Swiss mercenaries in "wartgeld." It would be further desirable that Alexander should take most of the personages of quality and sufficiency in the Provinces over with him to England, in order that they should not make mischief in his absence.³

With regard to the point of secrecy, that was, in Parma's opinion, the most important of all. All leagues must become more or less public, particularly those contrived at or with Rome. Such being the case, the Queen of England would be well aware of the Spanish projects, and, besides her militia at home, would levy German infantry and cavalry, and provide plenty of vessels, relying therein upon Holland and Zeeland, where ships and sailors were in such abundance. Moreover, the English and the Netherlanders knew the coasts, currents, tides, shallows, quicksands, ports, better than did

¹ "Que no se han a perder el decoro y respeto a V. M. como lo ha hecho esta buena dama," &c. (Ibid.)

² "Se acabará con harta facilidad y brevedad lo de aca (viz. the Netherlands) que de otra manera, por la situ-

acion, fortaleza, y obstinacion de estas gentes, sera negocio largo, peligroso, y aun dudoso." (Ibid.)

³ MS. Letter of Parma to Philip, last cited.

the pilots of any fleets that the King could send thither. Thus, having his back assured, the enemy would meet them in front at a disadvantage. Although, notwithstanding this inequality, the enemy would be beaten, yet if the engagement should be warm, the Spaniards would receive an amount of damage which could not fail to be inconvenient, particularly as they would be obliged to land their troops, and to give battle to those who would be watching their landing. Moreover the English would be provided with cavalry, of which his Majesty's forces would have very little, on account of the difficulty of its embarkation.¹

The obedient Netherlands would be the proper place in which to organize the whole expedition. There the regiments could be filled up, provisions collected, the best way of effecting the passage ascertained, and the force largely increased without exciting suspicion; but with regard to the fleet, there were no ports there capacious enough for large vessels. Antwerp had ceased to be a seaport; but a large number of flat-bottomed barges, hoys, and other barks, more suitable for transporting soldiers, could be assembled in Dunkirk, Grave lines, and Newport, which, with some five-and-twenty larger vessels, would be sufficient to accompany the fleet.

The Queen, knowing that there were no large ships, nor ports to hold them in the obedient Provinces, would be unsuspecting, if no greater levies seemed to be making than the exigencies of the Netherlands might apparently require.

The flat-bottomed boats, drawing two or three feet of water, would be more appropriate than ships of war drawing twenty feet. The passage across, in favourable weather, might occupy from eight to twelve hours.

The number of troops for the invading force should be thirty thousand infantry, besides five hundred light troopers, with saddles, bridles, and lances, but without horses, because, in Alexander's opinion, it would be easier to mount them in England. Of these thirty thousand there should be six thousand Spaniards, six thousand Italians, six thousand Walloons, nine thousand Germans, and three thousand Burgundians.

¹ MS. Letter of Parma to Philip II. last cited.

Much money would be required ; at least three hundred thousand dollars the month for the new force, besides the regular one hundred and fifty thousand for the ordinary provision in the Netherlands ; and this ordinary provision would be more necessary than ever, because a mutiny breaking forth in the time of the invasion would be destruction to the Spaniards both in England and in the Provinces.

The most appropriate part of the coast for a landing would, in Alexander's opinion, be between Dover and Margate, because the Spaniards, having no footing in Holland and Zeeland, were obliged to make their starting-point in Flanders. The country about Dover was described by Parma as populous, well-wooded, and much divided by hedges ; advantageous for infantry, and not requiring a larger amount of cavalry than the small force at his disposal, while the people there were domestic in their habits, rich, and therefore less warlike, less trained to arms, and more engrossed by their occupations and their comfortable ways of life.¹ Therefore, although some encounters would take place, yet after the commanders of the invading troops had given distinct and clear orders, it would be necessary to leave the rest in the hands of God who governs all things, and from whose bounty and mercy it was to be hoped that He would favour a cause so eminently holy, just, and His own.²

It would be necessary to make immediately for London, which city, not being fortified, would be very easily taken. This point gained, the whole framework of the business might be considered as well put together.³ If the Queen should fly—as, being a woman, she probably would do—everything would be left in such confusion, as, with the blessing of God, it might soon be considered that the holy and heroic work had been accomplished.⁴ Her Majesty, it was suggested,

¹ "Domestica y rica, y la gente de ella consiguiente es menos armigera y bellicosa, y dada a sus trabajos y comodidades." MS. Letter of Parma, before cited.

² "En manos de Dios qui gobierna todas las cosas, y de cuya bondad y misericordia se debe esperar que favorecera causa tan santa, justa, y pro-

pria suya." (Ibid.)

³ "Sara tan facil de ganar, lo cual conseguido, se puede tener por tan buen entablado el negocio." (Ibid.)

⁴ "Se acogiesse, como siendo muger es de creer con la ayuda de n^o Señor, podria tener por acabada obra tan suya y heroica." MS. Letter of Parma, before cited.

would probably make her escape in a boat before she could be captured ; but the conquest would be nevertheless effected. Although, doubtless, some English troops might be got together to return and try their fortune, yet it would be quite useless ; for the invaders would have already planted themselves upon the soil, and then, by means of frequent excursions and forays hither and thither about the island, all other places of importance would be gained, and the prosperous and fortunate termination of the adventure assured.¹

As, however, everything was to be provided for, so, in case the secret could not be preserved, it would be necessary for Philip, under pretext of defending himself against the English and French corsairs, to send a large armada to sea, as doubtless the Queen would take the same measure. If the King should prefer, however, notwithstanding Alexander's advice to the contrary, to have confederates in the enterprise,—then, the matter being public, it would be necessary to prepare a larger and stronger fleet than any which Elizabeth, with the assistance of her French and Netherland allies, could oppose to him. That fleet should be well provided with vast stores of provisions, sufficient to enable the invading force, independently of forage, to occupy three or four places in England at once, as the enemy would be able to come from various towns and strong places to attack them.

As for the proper season for the expedition, it would be advisable to select the month of October of the current year, because the English barns would then be full of wheat and other forage, and the earth would have been sown for the next year—points of such extreme importance, that if the plan could not be executed at that time, it would be as well to defer it until the following October.²

The Prince recommended that the negotiations with the League should be kept spinning, without allowing them to come to a definite conclusion ; because there would be no lack of difficulties perpetually offering themselves,³ and the more

¹ "Discurriendo la isla, ganando plazas de importancia . . . y se puede tener por asegurado el prospero y felice fin." (Ibid.)

² Ibid.

³ "Que la platica de la liga vaya adelante sin concluirse, alargandola todo lo que se pudiese, pues no faltaran dificultades que se ofrecieran." (Ibid.)

intricate and involved the policy of France, the better it would be for the interests of Spain. Alexander expressed the utmost confidence that his Majesty, with his powerful arm, would overcome all obstacles in the path of his great project, and would show the world that he "could do a little more than what was possible."¹ He also assured his master, in most extravagant language, of his personal devotion, adding that it was unnecessary for him to offer his services in this particular enterprise, because, ever since his birth, he had dedicated and consecrated himself to execute his royal commands.

He further advised that old Peter Ernest Mansfeld should be left commander-in-chief of the forces in the Netherlands during his own absence in England. "Mansfeld was an honourable cavalier," he said, "and a faithful servant of the King; and although somewhat ill-conditioned at times, yet he had essential good qualities, and was the only general fit to be trusted alone."²

The reader, having thus been permitted to read the inmost thoughts of Philip and Alexander, and to study their secret plans for conquering England in October, while their frivolous yet mischievous negotiations with the Queen had been going on from April to June, will be better able than before to judge whether Leicester were right or no in doubting if a good peace could be obtained by a "merchant's brokerage."

And now, after examining these pictures of inter-aulic politics and back-stairs diplomacy, which represent so large and characteristic a phasis of European history during the year 1586, we must throw a glance at the external, more stirring, but not more significant public events which were taking place during the same period.

¹ "Y se llegará a hacer algo mas de lo posible." (Ibid.)

² Ibid.

**HISTORY OF THE
UNITED NETHERLANDS**

BOOK II



THE EARL OF LEICESTER.

THE UNITED NETHERLANDS.

CHAPTER IX.

Military Plans in the Netherlands—The Elector and Electorate of Cologne — Martin Schenk — His Career before serving the States — Franeker University founded — Parma attempts Grave — Battle on the Meuse — Success and Vainglory of Leicester — St. George's Day triumphantly kept at Utrecht — Parma not so much appalled as it was thought — He besieges and reduces Grave — And is Master of the Meuse — Leicester's Rage at the Surrender of Grave — His Revenge — Parma on the Rhine — He besieges and assaults Neuz — Horrible Fate of the Garrison and City — Which Leicester was unable to relieve — Axel surprised by Maurice and Sidney — The Zeeland Regiment given to Sidney — Condition of the Irish and English Troops — Leicester takes the Field — He reduces Doesburg — He lays siege to Zutphen — Which Parma prepares to relieve — The English intercept the Convoy — Battle of Warnsfeld — Sir Philip Sidney wounded — Results of the Encounter — Death of Sidney at Arnheim — Gallantry of Edward Stanley.

FIVE great rivers hold the Netherland territory in their coils. Three are but slightly separated—the Yssel, Waal, and ancient Rhine, while the Scheldt and Meuse are spread more widely asunder. Along each of these streams were various fortified cities, the possession of which, in those days, when modern fortification was in its infancy, implied the control of the surrounding country. The lower part of all the rivers, where they mingled with the sea and became wide estuaries, belonged to the Republic, for the coasts and the ocean were in the hands of the Hollanders and English. Above, the various strong places were alternately in the hands of the Spaniards and of the patriots.

Thus Antwerp, with the other Scheldt cities, had fallen into Parma's power, but Flushing, which controlled them all, was

held by Philip Sidney for the Queen and States. On the Meuse, Maastricht and Roermond were Spanish, but Venloo, Grave, Meghem, and other towns, held for the commonwealth. On the Waal, the town of Nymegen had, through the dexterity of Martin Schenk, been recently transferred to the royalists, while the rest of that river's course was true to the republic. The Rhine, strictly so called, from its entrance into Netherland, belonged to the rebels. Upon its elder branch, the Yssel, Zutphen was in Parma's hands, while, a little below, Deventer had been recently and adroitly saved by Leicester and Count Meurs from falling into the same dangerous grasp.

Thus the triple Rhine, after it had crossed the German frontier, belonged mainly, although not exclusively, to the States. But on the edge of the Batavian territory, the ancient river, just before dividing itself into its three branches, flowed through a debateable country which was even more desolate and forlorn, if possible, than the land of the obedient Provinces.¹

This unfortunate district was the archi-episcopal electorate of Cologne. The city of Cologne itself, Neusz, and Rheinberg, on the river, Werll and other places in Westphalia and the whole country around, were endangered, invaded, ravaged, and the inhabitants plundered, murdered, and subjected to every imaginable outrage, by rival bands of highwaymen, enlisted in the support of the two rival bishops—beggars, outcasts, but high-born and learned churchmen both—who disputed the electorate.

At the commencement of the year a portion of the bishopric was still in the control of the deposed protestant elector Gebhard Truchsess, assisted of course by the English and the States. The city of Cologne was held by the Catholic elector, Ernest of Bavaria, bishop of Liege; but Neusz and Rheinberg were in the hands of the Dutch republic.

The military operations of the year were, accordingly, along the Meuse, where the main object of Parma was to

¹ Meteren, xiii. 235^{vo}.

wrest Grave from the Netherlands ; along the Waal, where, on the other hand, the patriots wished to recover Nymegen ; on the Yssel, where they desired to obtain the possession of Zutphen ; and in the Cologne electorate, where the Spaniards meant, if possible, to transfer Neusz and Rheinberg from Truchsess to Elector Ernest. To clear the course of these streams, and especially to set free that debateable portion of the river-territory which hemmed him in from neutral Germany, and cut off the supplies from his starving troops, was the immediate design of Alexander Farnese.

Nothing could be more desolate than the condition of the electorate. Ever since Gebhard Truchsess had renounced the communion of the Catholic Church for the love of Agnes Mansfeld, and so gained a wife and lost his principality, he had been a dependant upon the impoverished Nassaus, or a supplicant for alms to the thrifty Elizabeth. The Queen was frequently implored by Leicester, without much effect, to send the ex-elector a few hundred pounds to keep him from starving, as "he had not one groat to live upon,"¹ and, a little later, he was employed as a go-between, and almost a spy, by the Earl, in his quarrels with the patrician party rapidly forming against him in the States.

At Godesberg—the romantic ruins of which stronghold the traveller still regards with interest, placed as it is in the midst of that enchanting region where Drachenfels looks down on the crumbling tower of Roland and the convent of Nonnenwerth—the unfortunate Gebhard had sustained a conclusive defeat. A small, melancholy man, accomplished, religious, learned, "very poor but very wise," comely, but of mean stature, altogether an unlucky and forlorn individual,²

¹ 'Leyc. Corresp.' 378.

² "When I spake of the Elector here," said Leicester, "I assure you he is a very wise gentleman; and if it were possible to set him in his place again, these countries were soon at quiet. . . . He is exceeding poor, and great pity. Believe me, my Lord, he is worthy to be esteemed. He doth greatly love and honour her Majesty.

I would to God your Lordship could but procure her Majesty to bestow 500 or 600 pound on him for a token. I have received more comfort and good advice of him than of any man here. He is very virtuous, and very sound in religion; very grave, and a comely person, but of a mean stature. His adversary doth all he can to put the King of Spain into his territories, yea,

he was not, after all, in very much inferior plight to that in which his rival, the Bavarian bishop, had found himself. Prince Ernest, archbishop of Liege and Cologne, a hanger-on of his brother, who sought to shake him off, and a stipendiary of Philip, who was a worse paymaster than Elizabeth, had a sorry life of it, notwithstanding his nominal possession of the see. He was forced to go, disguised and in secret, to the Prince of Parma at Brussels,¹ to ask for assistance, and to mention, with lacrymose vehemence, that both his brother and himself had determined to renounce the episcopate, unless the forces of the Spanish King could be employed to recover the cities on the Rhine. If Neusz and Rheinberg were not wrested from the rebels, Cologne itself would soon be gone. Ernest represented most eloquently to Alexander, that if the protestant archbishop were reinstated in the ancient see, it would be a most perilous result for the ancient church throughout all northern Europe. Parma kept the wandering prelate for a few days in his palace in Brussels, and then dismissed him, disguised and on foot, in the dusk of the evening, through the park-gate.² He encouraged him with hopes of assistance, he represented to his sovereign the importance of preserving the Rhenish territory to Bishop Ernest and to Catholicism, but hinted that the declared intention of the Bavarian to resign the

even into Cologne itself. He is very poor, and weary of his keeping that place with such charge. His bishopric of Liege is all spoiled also with these wars, and he no longer able to maintain his charges. A small matter would set up this man now. He hath many friends in Germany, and more of late than ever he had." Leicester to Burghley, 28 Feb. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

Lord North had also conceived a favourable opinion of Truchsess, whom he spoke of as a "rare gentleman, notably furnished with excellent gifts, religious, and worthy of all honour and estimation." North to Burghley, 28 Feb. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

¹ Parma to Philip II. 28 Feb. 1586. (Archivo de Simancas, MS.) Compare Strada, II. 426.

² Parma to Philip II. (MS. last cited.) Compare Strada, who appears to be very much mistaken in representing the Elector Ernest as having been dismissed by Parma with great state, and with a magnificent escort of Belgian nobility,—"because no mask can ever entirely disguise a prince, and because suns, even when under a cloud, have more spectators than ever."

"Nempe nulla larva totum principem tegit; immo soles, etiam isti quum deficient, tunc maxime spectatores habent," and so on, II. 427.

dignity, was probably a trick, because the archi-episcopate was no such very bad thing after all.¹

The archi-episcopate might be no very bad thing, but it was a most uncomfortable place of residence, at the moment, for prince or peasant. Overrun by hordes of brigands, and crushed almost out of existence by that most deadly of all systems of taxations, the 'brandschätzung,' it was fast becoming a mere den of thieves. The 'brandschätzung' had no name in English, but it was the well-known impost, levied by roving commanders, and even by respectable generals of all nations. A hamlet, cluster of farm-houses, country district, or wealthy city, in order to escape being burned and ravaged, as the penalty of having fallen into a conqueror's hands, paid a heavy sum of ready money on the nail at command of the conqueror. The free companions of the sixteenth century drove a lucrative business in this particular branch of industry; and when to this was added the more direct profits derived from actual plunder, sack, and ransoming, it was natural that a large fortune was often the result to the thrifty and persevering commander of free lances.

Of all the professors of this comprehensive art, the terrible Martin Schenk was preeminent; and he was now ravaging the Cologne territory, having recently passed again to the service of the States. Immediately connected with the chief military events of the period which now occupies us, he was also the very archetype of the marauders whose existence was characteristic of the epoch. Born in 1549 of an ancient and noble family of Gelderland, Martin Schenk had inherited no property but a sword. Serving for a brief term as page to the Seigneur of Ysselstein, he joined, while yet a youth, the banner of William of Orange, at the head of two men-at-arms. The humble knight-errant, with his brace of squires, was received with courtesy by the Prince and the Estates, but he soon quarrelled with his patrons. There was a castle of

¹ "Porque no le esta tan mal el electorado." MS. letter of Parma last cited.

Blyenbeek, belonging to his cousin, which he chose to consider his rightful property, because he was of the same race, and because it was a convenient and productive estate and residence. The courts had different views of public law, and supported the ousted cousin. Martin shut himself up in the castle, and having recently committed a rather discreditable homicide, which still further increased his unpopularity with the patriots, he made overtures to Parma.¹ Alexander was glad to enlist so bold a soldier on his side, and assisted Schenk in his besieged stronghold. For years afterwards, his services under the King's banner were most brilliant, and he rose to the highest military command, while his coffers, meantime, were rapidly filling with the results of his robberies and 'brandschätzungs.' " 'Tis a most courageous fellow," said Parma, "but rather a desperate highwayman than a valiant soldier."² Martin's couple of lances had expanded into a corps of free companions, the most truculent, the most obedient, the most rapacious in Christendom. Never were freebooters more formidable to the world at large, or more docile to their chief, than were the followers of General Schenk. Never was a more finished captain of highwaymen. He was a man who was never sober, yet who never smiled. His habitual intoxication seemed only to increase both his audacity and his taciturnity, without disturbing his reason. He was incapable of fear, of fatigue, of remorse. He could remain for days and nights without dismounting—eating, drinking, and sleeping in the saddle; so that to this terrible centaur his horse seemed actually a part of himself. His soldiers followed him about like hounds, and were treated by him like hounds. He habitually scourged them, often took with his own hand the lives of such as displeased him, and had been known to cause individuals of them to jump from the top of church steeples³ at his command; yet the pack were ever stanch to his orders, for they knew that he always

¹ Meteren, xiii. 231, 'Levensbeschrijving Nederl. Mannen,' vol. ii. *in voce*. Strada, II. 633. *et aliunde*.

² Parma to Philip II., 6 June, 1585. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

³ Archer, in Stowe, 739.

led them where the game was plenty. While serving under Parma he had twice most brilliantly defeated Hohenlo. At the battle of Hardenberg Heath he had completely outgeneralled that distinguished chieftain, slaying fifteen hundred of his soldiers at the expense of only fifty or sixty of his own. By this triumph he had preserved the important city of Groningen for Philip, during an additional quarter of a century, and had been received in that city with rapture. Several startling years of victory and rapine he had thus run through as a royalist partisan. He became the terror and the scourge of his native Gelderland, and he was covered with wounds received in the King's service. He had been twice captured and held for ransom. Twice he had effected his escape. He had recently gained the city of Nymegen. He was the most formidable, the most unscrupulous, the most audacious Netherlander that wore Philip's colours; but he had received small public reward for his services, and the wealth which he earned on the high-road did not suffice for his ambition. He had been deeply disgusted, when, at the death of Count Renneberg, Verdugo, a former stable-boy of Mansfeld, a Spaniard who had risen from the humblest rank to be a colonel and general, had been made governor of Friesland. He had smothered his resentment for a time however, but had sworn within himself to desert at the most favourable opportunity. At last, after he had brilliantly saved the city of Breda from falling into the hands of the patriots, he was more enraged than he had ever been before, when Haultepenne, of the house of Berlaymont, was made governor of that place in his stead.

On the 25th of May, 1585, at an hour after midnight, he had a secret interview with Count Meurs, stadholder for the States of Gelderland, and agreed to transfer his mercenary allegiance to the republic. He made good terms. He was to be lieutenant-governor of Gelderland, and he was to have rank as marshal of the camp in the States' army, with a salary of twelve hundred and fifty guilders a month. He agreed to resign his famous castle of Blyenbeek, but was to

be reimbursed with estates in Holland and Zeeland, of the annual value of four thousand florins.¹

After this treaty, Martin and his free lances served the States faithfully, and became sworn foes to Parma and the King. He gave and took no quarter, and his men, if captured, "paid their ransom with their heads."² He ceased to be the scourge of Gelderland, but he became the terror of the electorate. Early in 1586, accompanied by Herman Kloet, the young and daring Dutch commandant of Neusz, he had swept down into the Westphalian country, at the head of five hundred foot and five hundred horse. On the 18th of March he captured the city of Werll by a neat stratagem. The citizens, hemmed in on all sides by marauders, were in want of many necessities of life, among other things, of salt. Martin had, from time to time, sent some of his soldiers into the place, disguised as boors from the neighbourhood, and carrying bags of that article. A pacific trading-intercourse had thus been established between the burghers within and the banditti without the gates. Agreeable relations were formed within the walls, and a party of townsmen had agreed to cooperate with the followers of Schenk. One morning a train of waggons laden with soldiers neatly covered with salt, made their appearance at the gate. At the same time a fire broke out most opportunely within the town. The citizens busily employed themselves in extinguishing the flames. The salted soldiers, after passing through the gateway, sprang from the waggons, and mastered the watch. The town was carried at a blow. Some of the inhabitants were massacred as a warning to the rest; others were taken prisoners and held for ransom; a few, more fortunate, made their escape to the citadel. That fortress was stormed in vain, but the city was thoroughly sacked. Every house was rifled of its contents. Meantime Haultepenne collected a force of nearly four thousand men, boors, citizens, and soldiers, and came to besiege Schenk in the town, while,

¹ 'Nederl. Mannen,' &c., *ubi sup.*

² Doyley to Burghley, June 24, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

at the same time, attacks were made upon him from the castle. It was impossible for him to hold the city, but he had completely robbed it of every thing valuable. Accordingly he loaded a train of waggons with his booty, took with him thirty of the magistrates as hostages, with other wealthy citizens, and marching in good order against Haultepenne, completely routed him, killing a number variously estimated at from five hundred to two thousand, and effected his retreat, desperately wounded in the thigh, but triumphant, and laden with the spoils to Venlo on the Meuse, of which city he was governor.¹

"Surely this is a noble fellow, a worthy fellow," exclaimed Leicester, who was filled with admiration at the bold marauder's progress, and vowed that he was "the only soldier in truth that they had, for he was never idle, and had succeeded hitherto very happily."²

And thus, at every point of the doomed territory of the little commonwealth, the natural atmosphere in which the inhabitants existed was one of blood and rapine. Yet during the very slight lull, which was interposed in the winter of 1585-6 to the eternal clang of arms in Friesland, the Estates of that Province, to their lasting honour, founded the university of Franeker. A dozen years before, the famous institution at Leyden had been established, as a reward to the burghers for their heroic defence of the city. And now this new proof was given of the love of Netherlands, even in the midst of their misfortune and their warfare, for the more humane arts. The new college was well endowed from ancient churchlands, and not only was the education made nearly gratuitous, while handsome salaries were provided for the professors, but provision was made by which the poorer scholars could be fed and boarded at a very moderate expense. There was a table

¹ Meteren, *Strada*, *Nederl. Mannen*, &c., *ubi sup.* Bor. II. 699, 700. Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 79, 139, 141, 167, 227, 265, 475. Lord North to Burghley, Feb. 28, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.) Lei-

cester to Burghley, same date. *Ibid.* MS. Leicester to Burghley and Walsingham, 16 March, 1586. *Ibid.* MS.

² Leicester to Burghley and Walsingham. MS. *ubi sup.*

provided at an annual cost to the student of but fifty florins (5*l.*), and a second and third table at the very low price of forty and thirty florins respectively. Thus the sum to be paid by the poorer class of scholars for a year's maintenance was less than three pounds sterling a year. The voice with which this infant seminary of the Muses first made itself heard above the din of war was but feeble, but the institution was destined to thrive, and to endow the world, for many successive generations, with the golden fruits of science and genius.¹

Early in the spring, the war was seriously taken in hand by Farnese. It has already been seen that the republic had been almost entirely driven out of Flanders and Brabant. The Estates, however, still held Grave, Megem, Batenburg, and Venlo upon the Meuse. That river formed, as it were, a perfect circle of protection for the whole Province of Brabant, and Farnese determined to make himself master of this great natural moat. Afterwards, he meant to possess himself of the Rhine, flowing in a parallel course, about twenty-five miles further to the east. In order to gain and hold the Meuse, the first step was to reduce the city of Grave. That town, upon the left or Brabant bank, was strongly fortified on its land-side, where it was surrounded by low and fertile pastures, while, upon the other, it depended upon its natural foss, the river. It was, according to Lord North and the Earl of Leicester, the "strongest town in all the Low Countries, though but a little one."²

Baron Hemart, a young Gueldrian noble, of small experience in military affairs, commanded in the city, his garrison being eight hundred soldiers, and about one thousand burgher guard.³ As early as January, Farnese had ordered Count Mansfeld to lay siege to the place. Five forts had accord-

¹ Bor, II. 672.

² North to Burghley, 29 May, 1586. S. P. Office MS. Leicester to Queen Elizabeth, 16 June, 1586. S. P. Office MS.

³ Bor, II. 707, 708. Hoofd, Verv. 154, 155. Strada, II. 410. Wagenaar viii 126.

ingly been constructed, above and below the town, upon the left bank of the river, while a bridge of boats thrown across the stream led to a fortified camp on the opposite side. Mansfeld, Mondragon, Bobadil, Aquila, and other distinguished veterans in Philip's service, were engaged in the enterprise. A few unimportant skirmishes between Schenk and the Spaniards had taken place, but the city was already hard pressed, and, by the series of forts which environed it, was cut off from its supplies. It was highly important, therefore, that Grave should be relieved, with the least possible delay.

Early in Easter week, a force of three thousand men, under Hohenlo and Sir John Norris, was accordingly despatched by Leicester, with orders, at every hazard, to throw ^{April 5} ₁₅₈₆ reinforcements and provisions into the place. They took possession, at once, of a stone sconce, called the Mill-Fort, which was guarded by fifty men, mostly boors of the country.¹ These were nearly all hanged for "using malicious words," and for "railing against Queen Elizabeth,"² and—a sufficient number of men being left to maintain the fort—the whole relieving force marched with great difficulty—for the river was rapidly rising, and flooding the country—along the right bank of the Meuse, taking possession of Batenburg and Ravenstein castles, as they went. A force of four or five hundred Englishmen was then pushed forward to a point almost exactly opposite Grave, and within an English mile of the head of the bridge constructed by the Spaniards. Here, in the night of Easter Tuesday, they rapidly formed an entrenched camp, upon the dyke along the river, and, although molested by some armed vessels, succeeded in establishing themselves in a most important position.³

On the morning of Easter Wednesday, April 16, Mansfeld, perceiving that the enemy had thus stolen a march upon him,

¹ Occurrences from Holland, April, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Ibid. Compare 'Leycest. Corresp.' p. 218, April 5, 1586.

³ Occurrences from Holland, MS.

ordered one thousand picked troops, all Spaniards, under April $\frac{6}{16}$ Casco and other veterans, to assault this advanced 1586. post.¹ A reserve of two thousand was placed in readiness to support the attack. The Spaniards slowly crossed the bridge, which was swaying very dangerously with the current, and then charged the entrenched camp at a run. A quarrel between the different regiments as to the right of precedence precipitated the attack, before the reserve, consisting of some picked companies of Mondragon's veterans, had been able to arrive. Coming in breathless and fatigued, the first assailants were readily repulsed in their first onset. Aquila then opportunely made his appearance, and the attack was renewed with great vigour. The defenders of the camp yielded at the third charge and fled in dismay, while the Spaniards, leaping the barriers, scattered hither and thither in the ardour of pursuit. The routed Englishmen fled swiftly along the oozy dyke, in hopes of joining the main body of the relieving party, who were expected to advance, with the dawn, from their position six miles farther down the river. Two miles long the chace lasted, and it seemed probable that the fugitives would be overtaken and destroyed, when, at last, from behind a line of mounds which stretched towards Batenburg and had masked their approach, appeared Count Hohenlo and Sir John Norris, at the head of twenty-five hundred Englishmen and Hollanders. This force advanced as rapidly as the slippery ground and the fatigue of a two hours' march would permit to the rescue of their friends, while the retreating English rallied, turned upon their pursuers, and drove them back over the path along which they had just been charging in the full career of victory. The fortune of the day was changed, and in a few minutes Hohenlo and Norris would have crossed the river and entered Grave, when the Spanish companies of Bobadil and other commanders were seen marching along the quaking bridge.

¹ Strada, II. 413, *seq.* Hoofd, Vervolg, 154, 155. Occurrences, &c. MS Bruce's 'Leycester. Corresp. 223, 226.

Three thousand men on each side now met at push of pike on the bank of the Meuse.¹ The rain was pouring in torrents, the wind was blowing a gale, the stream was rapidly rising, and threatening to overwhelm its shores. By a tacit and mutual consent, both armies paused for a few moments in full view of each other. After this brief interval they closed again, breast to breast, in sharp and steady conflict. The ground, slippery with rain and with blood, which was soon flowing almost as fast as the rain, afforded an unsteady footing to the combatants. They staggered like drunken men, fell upon their knees, or upon their backs, and still, kneeling or rolling prostrate, maintained the deadly conflict. For the space of an hour and a half the fierce encounter of human passion outmastered the fury of the elements. Norris and Hohenlo fought at the head of their columns, like paladins of old. The Englishman was wounded in the mouth and breast, the Count was seen to gallop past one thousand musketeers and caliver-men of the enemy, and to escape unscathed. But as the strength of the soldiers exhausted itself, the violence of the tempest increased. The floods of rain and the blasts of the hurricane at last terminated the affray. The Spaniards, fairly conquered, were compelled to a retreat, lest the rapidly rising river should sweep away the frail and trembling bridge, over which they had passed to their unsuccessful assault. The English and Netherlanders remained masters of the field. The rising flood, too, which was fast converting the meadows into a lake, was as useful to the conquerors as it was damaging to the Spaniards.

In the course of the few following days, a large number of boats was despatched before the very eyes of Parma, from April ⁶/₁₆, Batenburg into Grave; Hohenlo, who had "most 1586. desperately adventured his person" throughout the whole affair, entering the town himself. A force of five hundred men, together with provisions enough to last a year, was thrown into the city, and the course of the Meuse was,

¹ Strada, II. 413, 414. Occurrences from Holland, MS.

apparently, secured to the republic. In this important action about one hundred and fifty Dutch and English were killed, and probably four hundred Spaniards, including several distinguished officers.¹

The Earl of Leicester was incredibly elated so soon as the success of this enterprise was known. "Oh that her Majesty knew," he cried, "how easy a match now she hath with the King of Spain, and what millions of afflicted people she hath relieved in these countries. This summer, this summer, I say, would make an end to her immortal glory."² He was no friend to his countryman, the gallant Sir John Norris—whom, however, he could not help applauding on this occasion,—but he was in raptures with Hohenlo. Next to God, he assured the Queen's government that the victory was owing to the Count. "He is both a valiant man and a wise man, and the painfulest that ever I knew," he said; adding—as a secret—that "five hundred Englishmen of the best Flemish training had flatly and shamefully run away," when the fight had been renewed by Hohenlo and Norris. He recommended that her Majesty should send her picture to the Count, worth two hundred pounds, which he would value at more than one thousand pounds in money, and he added that "for her sake the Count had greatly left his drinking."³

¹ Leicester to Burghley, April $\frac{6}{16}$, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.) R. Cavendish to Burghley, April $\frac{8}{18}$, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.) Lord Willoughby to Burghley, $\frac{9}{19}$ April, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.) Occurrences from Holland, MS. Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.* 226, 244, 245, 252, 253. Parma to Philip II. $\frac{27}{29}$ April and 9 May, 1586. (Archivo de Simancas, MS.)

Lord North to Burghley, $\frac{2}{12}$ May, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.) "Count Hollock performed this service with wisdom and most valiantly in his own person. I cannot give him too much praise, because there is so much due

to him."

Compare Strada, II. 413, 414. Meteren, xiii. 234. Hoofl, 155, *seq. et al.* It is of slight consequence, at the present day, to know the exact number of the combatants who perished in this hotly-contested, but now forgotten field. As a specimen of conflicting statistics, after a battle, it is worth while to observe that, according to some *eye-witnesses*, nine hundred Spaniards were killed, and, according to others, thirty, while, on the other hand, the statement of the loss sustained by their antagonists varied from fifty to seven hundred.

² Bruce's '*Leyc. Corresp.*' 264, May $\frac{8}{18}$, 1586.

³ Bruce's '*Leyc. Corresp.*' 245.

As for the Prince of Parma, Leicester looked upon him as conclusively beaten. He spoke of him as "marvellously appalled" by this overthrow of his forces, but he assured the government that if the Prince's "choler should press him to seek revenge," he should soon be driven out of the country. The Earl would follow him "at an inch," and effectually frustrate all his undertakings. "If the Spaniard have such a May as he has had an April," said Lord North, "it will put water in his wine."¹

Meantime, as St. George's Day was approaching, and as the Earl was fond of banquets and ceremonies, it was thought desirable to hold a great triumphal feast at Utrecht. His journey to that city from the Hague was a triumphal procession. In all the towns through which he passed he was entertained with military display, pompous harangues, interludes, dumb shows, and allegories. At Amsterdam—a city which he compared to Venice for situation and splendour, and where one thousand ships were constantly lying—he was received with "sundry great whales and other fishes of hugeness," that gambolled about his vessel, and convoyed him to the shore. These monsters of the deep presented him to the burgomaster and magistrates who were awaiting him on the quay. The burgomaster made him a Latin oration, to which Dr. Bartholomew Clerk responded, and then the Earl was ushered to the grand square, upon which, in his honour, a magnificent living picture was exhibited, in which he figured as Moses, at the head of the Israelites, smiting the Philistines hip and thigh.² After much mighty banqueting in Amsterdam, as in the other cities, the governor-general came to Utrecht. Through the streets of this antique and most picturesque city flows the palsied current of the Rhine, and every barge and bridge were decorated with the flowers of spring. Upon this spot, where, eight centuries before the Anglo-Saxon Willebrod had first astonished the wild Frisians with the

¹ North to Burghley, $\frac{2}{12}$ May, 1586. S. P. Office MS.

² 'Leyc. Corresp.' 476, *seq.*

pacific doctrines of Jesus, and had been stoned to death as his reward, stood now a more arrogant representative of English piety. The balconies were crowded with fair women, and decorated with scarves and banners. From the Earl's residence—the ancient palace of the Knights of Rhodes—to the cathedral, the way was lined with a double row of burgher guards, wearing red roses on their arms, and apparelled in the splendid uniforms for which the Netherlands were celebrated. Trumpeters in scarlet and silver, barons, knights, and great officers, in cloth of gold and silks of all colours; the young Earl of Essex, whose career was to be so romantic, and whose fate so tragic; those two ominous personages, the deposed little archbishop-elect of Cologne, with his melancholy face, and the unlucky Don Antonio, Pretender of Portugal, for whom, dead or alive, thirty thousand crowns and a dukedom¹ were perpetually offered by Philip II.; young Maurice of Nassau, the future controller of European destinies; great counsellors of state, gentlemen, guardsmen, and portcullis-herald, with the coat of arms of Elizabeth, rode in solemn procession along. Then great Leicester himself, “most princelike in the robes of his order,” guarded by a troop of burghers, and by his own fifty halberd-men in scarlet cloaks trimmed with white and purple velvet, pranced gorgeously by.²

The ancient cathedral, built on the spot where Saint Willebrod had once ministered, with its light, tapering, brick tower, three hundred and sixty feet in height, its exquisitely mullioned windows, and its elegantly foliated columns, soon received the glittering throng. Hence, after due religious ceremonies, and an English sermon from Master Knewstubs, Leicester's chaplain, was a solemn march back again to the palace, where a stupendous banquet was already laid in the great hall.³ April, 1586.

On the dais at the upper end of the table, blazing with

¹ Declaration of Don Antonio, in Bor, II. 769.

² Holingshead, iv. 658, seq. Stowe, 717. Hooff, Vervolgh, 145.

³ Ibid.

plate and crystal, stood the royal chair, with the Queen's plate and knife and fork before it, exactly as if she had been present, while Leicester's trencher and stool were set respectfully quite at the edge of the board. In the neighbourhood of this post of honour sat Count Maurice, the Elector, the Pretender, and many illustrious English personages, with the fair Agnes Mansfeld, Princess Chimay, the daughters of William the Silent, and other dames of high degree.

Before the covers were removed, came limping up to the dais grim-visaged Martin Schenk, freshly wounded, but triumphant, from the sack of Werll, and black John Norris, scarcely cured of the spear-wounds in his face and breast received at the relief of Grave. The sword of knighthood¹ was laid upon the shoulder of each hero, by the Earl of Leicester, as her Majesty's vicegerent; and then the ushers marshalled the mighty feast. Meats in the shape of lions, tigers, dragons, and leopards, flanked by peacocks, swans, pheasants, and turkeys "in their natural feathers as in their greatest pride," disappeared, course after course,—sonorous metal blowing meanwhile the most triumphant airs. After the banquet came dancing, vaulting, tumbling, together with the "forces of Hercules, which gave great delight to the strangers," after which the company separated until even-song.

Then again, "great was the feast," says the chronicler,—a mighty supper following hard upon the gigantic dinner. After this there was tilting at the barriers, the young Earl of Essex and other knights bearing themselves more chivalrously than would seem to comport with so much eating and drinking. Then, horrible to relate, came another "most sumptuous banquet of sugar-meates for the men-at-arms and the

¹ Bor. II. 699, 700. Stowe, Holinshed, *ubi sup.* 'Leyc. Corresp.' 252, 253, April ¹⁶/₂₀ 1586.

"*Shenke* is a worthy fellow," said Leicester, who never could get nearer than this to the name of the terrible partisan. He also mentioned that he

had given the worthy fellow a chain, as from her Majesty; adding, with an eye to Elizabeth's thrift, that if she thought he had paid too much for it, he would cheerfully pay the balance over what seemed the right sum out of his own pocket. 'Leyc. Corresp.' 227, 228.

ladies," after which, it being now midnight, the Lord of Leicester bade the whole company good rest, and the men-at-arms and ladies took their leave.¹

But while all this chivalrous banqueting and holiday-making was in hand, the Prince of Parma was in reality not quite so much "appalled" by the relief of Grave as his antagonist had imagined. The Earl, flushed with the success of Hohenlo, already believed himself master of the country, and assured his government, that, if he should be reasonably well supplied, he would have Antwerp back again and Bruges besides "before mid June."²

Never, said he, was "the Prince of Parma so dejected nor so melancholy since he came into these countries, nor so far out of courage."³ And it is quite true that Alexander had reason to be discouraged. He had but eight or nine thousand men, and no money to pay even this little force. The soldiers were perishing daily, and nearly all the survivors were described by their chief as sick or maimed. The famine in the obedient Provinces was universal, the whole population was desperate with hunger; and the merchants, frightened by Drake's successes, and appalled by the ruin all around them, drew their purse-strings inexorably.⁴ "I know not to what saint to devote myself," said Alexander.⁵ He had been compelled, by the movement before Grave, to withdraw Haultepenne from the projected enterprise against Neusz, and he was quite aware of the cheerful view which Leicester was inclined to take of their relative positions. "The English think they are going to do great things," said he, "and consider themselves masters of the field."⁶

Nevertheless, on the 11th May, the dejected melancholy man had left Brussels, and joined his little army, consisting of three thousand Spaniards and five thousand of all other

¹ Stowe, Holinshed, Bor, Hoofd, *ubi supra*.

² 'Leyc. Corresp.' 251, ^{30 April}
^{10 May}, 1586.

³ Ibid.

⁴ "Cierran la bolsa." Parma to

Philip, 9 May, 1586. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

⁵ Same to same, 27 April, 1586. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

⁶ Letter of 9 May, MS.

nations.¹ His veterans, though unpaid, ragged, and half-starved, were in raptures to have their idolized May 11, commander among them again, and vowed that under 1586. his guidance there was nothing which they could not accomplish. The King's honour, his own, that of the army, all were pledged to take the city. On the success of that enterprise, he said, depended all his past conquests, and every hope for the future. Leicester and the English, whom he called the head and body of the rebel forces, were equally pledged to relieve the place, and were bent upon meeting him in the field.² The Earl had taken some forts in the Batavia—Betuwe, or "good meadow," which he pronounced as fertile and about as large as Herefordshire,³—and was now threatening Nymegen, a city which had been gained for Philip by the last effort of Schenk, on the royalist side. He was now observing Alexander's demonstrations against Grave, but, after the recent success in victualling that place, he felt a just confidence in its security.

On the 31st May the trenches were commenced, and on the 5th June the batteries were opened. The work went rapidly forward when Farnese was in the field. 31st May, "The Prince of Parma doth batter it like a Prince,"⁴ 1586. said Lord North, admiring the enemy with the enthusiasm of an honest soldier. On the 6th of June, as Alexander rode through the camp to reconnoitre, previous to an attack, a well-directed cannon ball carried away the hinder half of his horse.⁵ The Prince fell to the ground, and, for a moment, dismay was in the Spanish ranks. At the next instant, though somewhat bruised, he was on his feet again, and, having found the breach sufficiently promising, he determined on the assault.

As a preliminary measure, he wished to occupy a tower

¹ Parma to Philip II. 27 May, 1586. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

² Parma to Philip II. 27 May, 11 June, 1586. (Ibid.)

³ Leicester to the Queen, 27 May, VOL. I. — 1*

1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ North to Burghley, 29 May, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁵ Stowe, 718. Strada II. 416.

which had been battered nearly to ruins, situate near the river. Captain de Solis was ordered, with sixty veterans, to take possession of this tower, and to "have a look at the countenance of the enemy, without amusing himself with anything else."¹ The tower was soon secured, but Solis, in disobedience to his written instructions² led his men against the ravelin, which was still in a state of perfect defence. A musket-ball soon stretched him dead beneath the wall, and his followers, still attempting to enter the impracticable breach, were repelled by a shower of stones and blazing pitch-hoops. Hot sand, too, poured from sleeves and baskets, insinuated itself within the armour of the Spaniards, and occasioned such exquisite suffering, that many threw themselves into the river to allay the pain. Emerging refreshed, but confused, they attempted in vain to renew the onset. Several of the little band were slain, the assault was quite unsuccessful, and the trumpet sounded a recall.³ So completely discomfited were the Spaniards by this repulse, and so thoroughly at their ease were the besieged, that a soldier let himself down from the ramparts of the town for the sake of plundering the body of Captain Solis, who was richly dressed, and, having accomplished this feat, was quietly helped back again by his comrades from above.⁴

To the surprise of the besiegers, however, on the very next morning came a request from the governor of the city, Baron Hemart, to negotiate for a surrender. Alexander was, naturally, but too glad to grant easy terms, and upon the 7th of June the garrison left the town with colours displayed and drums beating, and the Prince of Parma marched into it, at the head of his troops. He found a year's provision there for six thousand men, while, at the same time, the walls had suffered so little, that he must have been obliged to wait long for a practicable breach.⁵

¹ Parma to Philip, 11 June, 1586. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

² Parma to Philip II., MS. just cited.

³ Strada, II. 417. Bor., II. 707, 708.

⁴ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 288.

⁵ Strada, II. 418. Bor., II. 707, 708. Parma to Philip II. 27 May, 11 June, 1586. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.) North

"There was no good reason even for women to have surrendered the place," exclaimed Leicester, when he heard the news.¹ And the Earl had cause to be enraged at such a result. He had received a letter only the day before, signed by Hemart himself and by all the officers in Grave, asserting their determination and ability to hold the place for a good five months, or for an indefinite period, and until they should be relieved. And indeed all the officers, with three exceptions, had protested against the base surrender. But at the bottom of the catastrophe—of the disastrous loss of the city and the utter ruin of young Hemart—was a woman. The governor was governed by his mistress, a lady of good family in the place, but of Spanish inclinations, and she, for some mysterious reasons, had persuaded him thus voluntarily to capitulate.²

Parma lost no time, however, in exulting over his success. Upon the same day the towns of Megen and Batenburg surrendered to him, and immediately afterwards siege was laid to Venlo, a town of importance, lying thirty miles farther up the Meuse. The wife and family of Martin Schenk were in the city, together with two hundred horses, and from forty to one hundred thousand crowns in money, plate, and furniture belonging to him.³

That bold partisan, accompanied by the mad Welshman,

to Burghley, ^{29 May}/_{8 June} 1586. (S. P. Office

MS.) Leicester to the Queen, ⁶/₁₆ June, 1586. (Ibid.)

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 288.

² Meteren, xlii. 235. Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 299-310. Strada, II. 418.

Leicester to the Queen, ⁶/₁₆ June, 1586.

(S. P. Office MS.) North to Burghley, ¹⁰/₂₁ June, 1586. (Ibid.)

"The governor, Hemart," said North, "is a gentleman of Gelder, of great kindred, living, and acquaintance. There be many vehement presumptions to argue a treacherous practice with the enemy. The best that can be made of it was most vile

cowardice, mixed with such negligence as is unspeakable. In the time of that siege he spent his time in his house, followed with his harlot, and when he came abroad he could not be gotten by entreaty of captains, burghers, or soldiers to do anything for the defence of the town, but straightway entered into a contenance of the people, wishing rather to give up the town than suffer the blood of so many innocents to be spilt. Which purpose he did prosecute with speed, and sent a drum to the enemy for parley. The town was impossible to be assaulted," &c. &c.

³ North to Burghley ^{26 June}/_{6 July} 1586. (S. P. Office MS.) T. Doyley to Burghley, ^{24 June}/_{4 July} 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

Roger Williams, at the head of one hundred and thirty English lances and thirty of Schenk's men, made a wild nocturnal attempt to cut their way through the besieging force, and penetrate to the city. They passed through the enemy's lines, killed all the corps-de-garde, and many Spanish troopers—the terrible Martin's own hand being most effective in this midnight slaughter—and reached the very door of Parma's tent, where they killed his secretary and many of his guards. It was even reported, and generally believed, that Farnese himself had been in imminent danger, that Schenk had fired his pistol at him unsuccessfully, and had then struck him on the head with its butt-end, and that the Prince had only saved his life by leaping from his horse, and scrambling through a ditch.¹ But these seem to have been fables. The alarm at last became general, the dawn of a summer's day was fast approaching, the drums beat to arms, and the bold marauders were obliged to effect their retreat, as they best might, hotly pursued by near two thousand men. Having slain many of the Spanish army, and lost nearly half their own number, they at last obtained shelter in Wachtendonk.²

Soon afterwards the place capitulated without waiting for a battery, upon moderate terms. Schenk's wife was sent away ^{28 June,} courteously with her family, in a coach and four, ^{1586.} and with as much "apparel" as might be carried with her. His property was confiscated, for "no fair wars could be made with him."³

Thus, within a few weeks after taking the field, the "dejected, melancholy" man, who was so "out of courage," and the soldiers who were so "marvellously beginning to run away"—according to the Earl of Leicester—had swept their enemy from every town on the Meuse. That river was now,

¹ North to Burghley, ¹⁶/₂₆ June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Ibid. Meteren, xiii. 235. Doyley to Burghley, ^{24 June}/_{4 July}, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Doyley to Burghley, *ubi sup.* Leicester to the Queen, ^{26 June}/_{6 July}, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.) North to Burghley, same date. (S. P. Office MS.) Parma to Philip II. 8 July, 1586. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.) Compare Strada, II. 423. Meteren, xiii. 235.

throughout its whole course, in the power of the Spaniards. The Province of Brabant became thoroughly guarded again by its foss, and the enemy's road was opened into the northern Provinces.

Leicester, meantime, had not distinguished himself. It must be confessed that he had been sadly outgeneralled. The man who had talked of following the enemy inch by inch, and who had pledged himself not only to protect Grave, and any other place that might be attacked, but even to recover Antwerp and Bruges within a few weeks, had wasted the time in very desultory operations. After the St. George feasting, Knewstub sermons, and forces of Hercules, were all finished, the Earl had taken the field with five thousand foot and fifteen hundred horse. His intention was to clear the Yssel, by getting possession of Doesburg and Zutphen, but, hearing of Parma's demonstrations upon Grave, he abandoned the contemplated siege of those cities, and came to Arnheim. He then crossed the Rhine into the Isle of Batavia, and thence, after taking a few sconces of inferior importance—while Schenk, meanwhile, was building on the Island of Gravenweert, at the bifurcation of the Rhine and Waal, the sconce so celebrated a century later as 'Schenk's Fort' (Schenkenschans)—he was preparing to pass the Waal in order to attack Farnese, when he heard, to his astonishment, of the surrender of Grave.”¹

He could therefore—to his chagrin—no longer save that important city, but he could, at least, cut off the head of the culprit. Leicester was in Bommel when he heard of Baron Hemart's faint-heartedness or treachery, and his wrath was extravagant in proportion to the exultation with which his previous success had inspired him. He breathed nothing but revenge against the coward and the traitor, who had delivered up the town in “such lewd and beastly sort.”

“I will never depart hence,” he said, “till by the goodness

¹ Meteren, xiii. 235^{re}.

Leicester to the Queen, ⁶₁₆ June. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

of God I be satisfied someway of this villain's treachery."¹ There could be little doubt that Hemart deserved punishment. There could be as little that Leicester would mete it out to him in ample measure. "The lewd villain who gave up Grave," said he, "and the captains as deep in fault as himself, shall all suffer together."²

Hemart came boldly to meet him. "The honest man came to me at Bommel," said Leicester, and he assured the government that it was in the hope of persuading the magistrates of that and other towns to imitate his own treachery.³

But the magistrates straightway delivered the culprit to the governor-general, who immediately placed him under ^{26 June,} arrest. A court-martial was summoned, ^{1586.} 26th of June, at Utrecht, consisting of Hohenlo, Essex, and other distinguished officers. They found that the conduct of the prisoner merited death, but left it to the Earl to decide whether various extenuating circumstances did not justify a pardon.⁴ Hohenlo and Norris exerted themselves to procure a mitigation of the young man's sentence, and they excited thereby the governor's deep indignation. Norris, according to Leicester, was in love with the culprit's aunt, and was therefore especially desirous of saving his life.⁵ Moreover, much use was made of the discredit which had been thrown by the Queen on the Earl's authority, and it was openly maintained, that, being no longer governor-general, he had no authority to order execution upon a Netherland officer.⁶

The favourable circumstances urged in the case, were, that Hemart was a young man, without experience in military matters, and that he had been overcome by the supplications and outcries of the women, panic-struck after the first assault. There were no direct proofs of treachery, or even of personal

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 285.

² Ibid. 287.

³ Leicester to the Queen, MS. before cited.

⁴ North to Burghley, $\frac{16}{26}$ June, 1586.

(S. P. Office MS.) Hootl, Vervolgh, 156.

⁵ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 301, 310, 313.

⁶ Leicester to the Queen, $\frac{14}{24}$ June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

cowardice. He begged hard for a pardon, not on account of his life, but for the sake of his reputation. He earnestly implored permission to serve under the Queen of England, as a private soldier, without pay, on land or sea, for as many years as she should specify, and to be selected for the most dangerous employments, in order that, before he died, he might wipe out the disgrace, which, through his fault, in an hour of weakness, had come upon an ancient and honourable house.¹ Much interest was made for him—his family connection being powerful—and a general impression prevailing that he had erred through folly rather than deep guilt. But Leicester beating himself upon the breast—as he was wont when excited—swore that there should be no pardon for such a traitor.² The States of Holland and Zeeland, likewise, were decidedly in favour of a severe example.³

Hemart was accordingly led to the scaffold on the 28th June. He spoke to the people with great calmness, and, in 20th June, two languages, French and Flemish, declared that

1586. he was guiltless of treachery, but that the terror and tears of the women, in an hour of panic, had made a coward of him.⁴ He was beheaded, standing. The two captains, Du Ban and Koeboekum, who had also been condemned, suffered with him.⁵ A third captain, likewise convicted, was, "for very just cause," pardoned by Leicester.⁶ The Earl persisted in believing that Hemart had surrendered the city as part of a deliberate plan, and affirmed that in such a time, when men had come to think no more of giving up a town than of abandoning a house, it was highly necessary to afford an example to traitors and satisfaction to the people.⁷ And the people were thoroughly satisfied, according to the governor, and only expressed their regret that three or four members of the States-General could not have their heads

¹ Hoofd, Vervolgh, 156. Meteren, xlii. 235^{vo}.

² Hoofd, *ubi supra*.

³ 'Resol. Holl,' 24 June, 1 July, 1586, bl. 220. Wagenaar, viii. 128.

⁴ Hoofd, Meteren, Wagenaar, *ubi*

sup.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Leicester to Burghley, ¹⁸ June, 1586. (S.P. Office MS.)

⁷ Bruce, 'Leyc. Corresp.,' 309 *seq.*

cut off as well, being as arrant knaves as Hemart ; "and so I think they be," added Leicester.¹

Parma having thus made himself master of the Meuse, lost no time in making a demonstration upon the parallel course of the Rhine, thirty miles farther east.² Schenk, Kloet, and other partisans, kept that portion of the archi-episcopate and of Westphalia in a state of perpetual commotion.³ Early in the preceding year, Count de Meurs had, by a fortunate stratagem, captured the town of Neusz for the deposed elector, and Herman Kloet, a young and most determined Geldrian soldier, now commanded in the place.⁴

The Elector Ernest had made a visit in disguise to the camp of Parma, and had represented the necessity of recovering the city. It had become the stronghold of heretics, rebels, and banditti. The Rhine was in their hands, and with it the perpetual power of disturbing the loyal Netherlands. It was as much the interest of his Catholic Majesty as that of the Archbishop that Neusz should be restored to its lawful owner. Parma had felt the force of this reasoning, and had early in the year sent Haultepenne to invest the city. He had been obliged to recal that commander during the siege of Grave. The place being reduced, Alexander, before the grass could grow beneath his feet advanced to the Rhine in person. Early in July he appeared before the walls of Neusz with eight thousand foot and two thousand horse. The garrison under Kloet numbered scarcely more than sixteen hundred effective soldiers,⁵ all Netherlands and Germans, none being English.

The city is twenty miles below Cologne. It was so well fortified that a century before it had stood a year's siege from the famous Charles the Bold, who, after all, had been obliged to retire.⁶ It had also resisted the strenuous efforts of Charles

¹ Leicester to the Queen, $\frac{14}{24}$ June,

1586. Same to Burghley, $\frac{18}{28}$ June, 1586.

(S. P. Office MSS.)

² Parma to Philip II. 8 July, 1586.

(Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

³ Wagenaar, viii. 131. Hoofd. Ver-
volgh, 154.

⁴ Strada, II. 425. Wagenaar, viii. 132.

⁵ Strada, &c., MS. just cited.

⁶ Meteren, xiii. 235^{vo}.

the Fifth,¹ and was now stronger than it ever had been. It was thoroughly well provisioned, so that it was safe enough "if those within it," said Leicester, "be men."² The Earl expressed the opinion, however, that "those fellows were not good to defend towns, unless the besiegers were obliged to swim to the attack."³ The issue was to show whether the sarcasm were just or not. Meantime the town was considered by the governor-general to be secure, "unless towns were to be had for the asking."⁴

Neusz is not immediately upon the Rhine, but that river, which sweeps away in a north-easterly direction from the walls, throws out an arm which completely encircles the town. A part of the place, cut into an island by the Erpt, was strengthened by two redoubts. This island was abandoned, as being too weak to hold, and the Spaniards took possession of it immediately.⁵ There were various preliminary and sanguinary sorties and skirmishes, during which the Spaniards after having been once driven from the island, again occupied that position. Archbishop Ernest came into the camp, and, before proceeding to a cannonade, Parma offered to the city certain terms of capitulation, which were approved by that prelate. Kloet replied to this proposal, that he was wedded to the town and to his honour, which were as one. These he was incapable of sacrificing, but his life he was ready to lay down.⁶ There was, through some misapprehension, a delay in reporting this answer to Farnese. Meantime that general became impatient, and advanced to the battery of the Italian regiment. Pretending to be a plenipotentiary from the commander-in-chief, he expostulated in a loud voice at the slowness of their counsels. Hardly had he begun to speak, when a shower of balls rattled about him. His own soldiers were terrified at his danger, and a cry arose in the town that "Holofernese"—

¹ Meteren, xiii. 235^{vo}.

² Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 250.

³ Leicester to Burghley, $\frac{30}{30}$ July, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Same to the Queen, $\frac{8}{18}$ July. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁵ Strada, II. 430.

⁶ North to Burghley, 26 July, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

as the Flemings and Germans were accustomed to nickname Farnese—was dead.¹ Strange to relate, he was quite unharmed, and walked back to his tent with dignified slowness and a very frowning face. It was said that this breach of truce had been begun by the Spaniards, who had fired first, and had been immediately answered by the town. This was hotly denied, and Parma sent Colonel Tassis with a flag of truce to the commander, to rebuke and to desire an explanation of this dishonourable conduct.²

The answer given, or imagined, was that Commander Kloet had been sound asleep, but that he now much regretted this untoward accident. The explanation was received with derision, for it seemed hardly probable that so young and energetic a soldier would take the opportunity to refresh himself with slumber at a moment when a treaty for the capitulation of a city under his charge was under discussion. This terminated the negotiation.³

A few days afterwards, the feast of St. James was celebrated in the Spanish camp, with bonfires and other demonstrations of hilarity. The townsmen are said to have desecrated the same holiday by roasting alive in the market-place two unfortunate soldiers, who had been captured in a sortie a few days before; besides burning the body of the holy Saint Quirinus, with other holy relics.⁴ The detestable deed was to be most horribly avenged.

A steady cannonade from forty-five great guns was kept up from 2 A.M. of July 15 until the dawn of the following day; 16 July, the cannoneers being all provided with milk and 1586. vinegar to cool the pieces.⁵ At daybreak the assault was ordered. Eight separate attacks were made with the usual impetuosity of Spaniards, and were steadily repulsed.⁶

¹ Hoofd, Vervolg, 179.

² Strada, II. 433. Hoofd, *ubi sup.*

³ Hoofd. Strada, *ubi sup.* Me-
teren, xiii. 236 *seq.*

⁴ Parma to Philip II. 4 Aug. 1586.
(Arch. de Simancas, MS.) Compare
Strada II. 434.

There is no authority but that of
Farnese for the statement of this
horrible crime, but I feel it my duty
to record it.

⁵ North to Burghley, 26 July, 1586
(S. P. Office MS.)

⁶ Ibid.

At the ninth, the outer wall was carried, and the Spaniards shouting "Santiago" poured over it, bearing back all resistance. An Italian Knight of the Sepulchre, Cesar Guidiccioni by name, and a Spanish ensign, one Alphonso de Mesa, with his colours in one hand and a ladder in the other, each claimed the honour of having first mounted the breach. Both being deemed equally worthy of reward, Parma, after the city had been won, took from his own cap a sprig of jewels and a golden wheat-ear ornamented with a gem, which he had himself worn in place of a plume, and thus presented each with a brilliant token of his regard.¹ The wall was then strengthened against the inner line of fortification, and all night long a desperate conflict was maintained in the dark upon the narrow space between the two barriers. Before daylight Kloet, who then, as always, had led his men in the most desperate adventures, was carried into the town, wounded in five places, and with his leg almost severed at the thigh.² "Tis the bravest man," said the enthusiastic Lord North, "that was ever heard of in the world."³ "He is but a boy," said Alexander Farnese, "but a commander of extraordinary capacity and valour."⁴

Early in the morning, when this mishap was known, an officer was sent to the camp of the besiegers to treat. The soldiers received him with furious laughter, and denied him access to the general. "Commander Kloet had waked from his nap at a wrong time," they said, "and the Prince of Parma was now sound asleep, in his turn."⁵ There was no possibility of commencing a negotiation. The Spaniards, heated by the conflict, maddened by opposition, and inspired by the desire to sack a wealthy city, overpowered all resistance. "My little soldiers were not to be restrained,"⁶ said Farnese, and so compelling a reluctant consent on the part of the commander-in-chief to an assault, the Italian and Spanish

¹ Strada, II. 435.

² Ibid. 436. North to Burghley, MS.

³ North to Burghley, MS.

⁴ Parma to Philip, 4 Aug. 1586. MS.

⁵ Strada, II. 437.

⁶ Parma to Philip, 4 Aug. 1586
(Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

legions poured into the town at two opposite gates, which were no longer strong enough to withstand the enemy. The two streams met in the heart of the place, and swept every living thing in their path out of existence. The garrison was butchered to a man, and subsequently many of the inhabitants—men, women, and children—also, although the women, to the honour of Alexander, had been at first secured from harm in some of the churches, where they had been ordered to take refuge. The first blast of indignation was against the commandant of the place. Alexander, who had admired his courage, was not unfavourably disposed towards him, but Archbishop Ernest vehemently demanded his immediate death, as a personal favour to himself.¹ As the churchman was nominally sovereign of the city, although in reality a beggarly dependant on Philip's alms, Farnese felt bound to comply. The manner in which it was at first supposed that the Bishop's Christian request had been complied with, sent a shudder through every heart in the Netherlands. "They took Kloet, wounded as he was," said Lord North, "and first strangled him, then smeared him with pitch, and burnt him with gunpowder; thus, with their holiness, they made a tragical end of an heroic service. It is wondered that the Prince would suffer so great an outrage to be done to so noble a soldier, who did but his duty."²

But this was an error. A Jesuit priest³ was sent to the

¹ The Jesuit Strada, II. 438, is the authority for the statement, founded upon Alexander's own letters; more of which were before him than can now be found in any single collection of documents. I have noticed very few of the Simancas letters relating to Farnese that do not seem to have been at Strada's disposal—although, of course, he only gives a very brief epitome of them in the Latin language—while he has used many others of which there are no copies at Simancas.

² North to Burghley, ^{16 July} 1586. (S. P. Office MS.) Leicester's account was still more horrible—"After Kloet was brought to the market-place," he

wrote to Walsingham, "being sore-wounded before, they laid him upon a table, and bound him, and anointed him with tar all over his body, and *half-strangling* him, burnt him cruelly." Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 369, ^{29 July} 1586. ^{8 Aug.}

Other English letters described the fate of the commandant in a similar manner, but the crime, although odious, was not quite so atrocious as it was at first believed to be.

³ "Ad quem lecto jacentum misso Societatis Jesu sacerdote, cujus operâ in eo saltem mortis articulo & secunda se morte præpererat," &c. Strada, II. 438.

house of the commandant, for a humane effort was thought necessary in order to save the soul of the man whose life was forfeited for the crime of defending his city. The culprit was found lying in bed. His wife, a woman of remarkable beauty,¹ with her sister, was in attendance upon him. The spectacle of those two fair women, nursing a wounded soldier fallen upon the field of honour, might have softened devils with sympathy. But the Jesuit was closely followed by a band of soldiers, who, notwithstanding the supplications of the women, and the demand of Kloet to be indulged with a soldier's death, tied a rope round the commandant's neck, dragged him from his bed, and hanged him from his own window. The Calvinist clergyman, Fosserus of Oppenheim, the deacons of the congregation, two military officers, and—said Parma—"forty other rascals," were murdered in the same way at the same time.² The bodies remained at the window till they were devoured by the flames, which soon consumed the house. For a vast conflagration, caused none knew whether by accident, by the despair of the inhabitants, by the previous arrangements of the commandant, by the latest-arrived bands of the besiegers enraged that the Italians and Spaniards had been beforehand with them in the spoils, or—as Farnese more maturely believed—by the special agency of the Almighty, offended with the burning of Saint Quirinus,³ now came to complete the horror of the scene. Three-quarters of the town were at once in a blaze. The churches, where the affrighted women had been cowering during the sack and slaughter, were soon on fire, and now, amid the crash of falling houses and the uproar of the drunken soldiery, those unhappy victims were seen flitting along the flaming streets, seeking refuge against the fury of the elements in the more horrible cruelty of man. The fire lasted all day and night, and not one stone would have been left upon another, had not the body of

¹ Strada, II. MS. last cited.

² "Se ahorcaron con el comandante, el ministro, los consistoriantes, y quaranta otros vallaos," &c. Parma to Philip, 4 Aug. 1586. (Arch. de Siman-

cas, MS.) Compare Strada, II. 438 Meteren, xiii. 236. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 179, 180. Bor, II. 738.

³ Strada, II. 441, 442.

a second saint, saved on a former occasion from the heretics by the piety of a citizen, been fortunately deposited in his house. At this point the conflagration was stayed—for the flames refused to consume these holy relics¹—but almost the whole of the town was destroyed, while at least four thousand people, citizens and soldiers, had perished by sword or fire.”²

Three hundred survivors of the garrison took refuge in a tower. Its base was surrounded, and, after brief parley, they
4 Aug., descended as prisoners. The Prince and Haultepenne
1586. attempted in vain to protect them against the fury of the soldiers, and every man of them was instantly put to death.³

The next day, Alexander gave orders that the wife and sister of the commandant should be protected—for they had escaped, as if by miracle, from all the horrors of that day and night—and sent, under escort, to their friends.⁴ Neusz had nearly ceased to exist, for, according to contemporaneous accounts, but eight houses had escaped destruction.

And the reflection was most painful to Leicester and to every generous Englishman or Netherlander in the country, that this important city and its heroic defenders might have been preserved, but for want of harmony and want of money.⁵ Twice had the Earl got together a force of four thousand men for the relief of the place, and twice had he been obliged to disband them again for the lack of funds to set them in the field.

¹ Strada, II. 440.

² Ibid. 442.

³ Ibid. 439.

⁴ Ibid. 438.

⁵ Bor, II. 738. Stowe, 734. Hoofft, Vervolgh, 179, 180. Meteren, xiii. 236, seq. Strada, II. 436-442. Parma to Philip II. 4 Aug. 1586. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

North to Burghley, ^{24 July}/_{5 Aug.}, 1586.

Same to same, ¹⁸/₂₃ Aug. 1586. Leicester

to Burghley, ^{29 July}/_{8 Aug.} T. Cecil to same,

²¹/₂₁ July. B. Clerke to same, ^{24 July}/_{3 Aug.}

W. Knollys to same, ¹/₁₁ Aug. T. Day-

ley to same, ⁸/₁₃ Aug. (S. P. Office MSS.)

⁶ Sir Thomas Cecil, eldest son of the Lord Treasurer, was then governor of the cautionary town of Brill. It had been proposed to him to change this government for that of Harlington in Friesland, where Lord North was then installed. But Cecil observed that he was “resolved to keep the Brill still, as one that would rather keep a shrew he knoweth than a shrew he knoweth not.” He was much disgusted with the perpetual discord which had succeeded the brief enthu-

He had pawned his plate and other valuables,¹ exhausted his credit, and had nothing for it but to wait for the Queen's tardy remittances, and to wrangle with the States; for the leaders of that body were unwilling to accord large supplies to a man who had become personally suspected by them, and was the representative of a deeply-suspected government. Meanwhile, one-third at least of the money which really found its way from time to time out of England, was filched from the "poor starved wretches," as Leicester called his soldiers, by the dishonesty of Norris, uncle of Sir John and army-treasurer. This man was growing so rich on his peculations, on his commissions, and on his profits from paying the troops in a depreciated coin, that Leicester declared the whole revenue of his own landed estates in England to be less than that functionary's annual income.² Thus it was difficult to say whether the "ragged rogues" of Elizabeth or the maimed and neglected soldiers of Philip were in the more pitiable plight.

The only consolation in the recent reduction of Neusz was to be found in the fact that Parma had only gained a position, for the town had ceased to exist; and in the fiction that he had paid for his triumph by the loss of *six thousand* soldiers, killed and wounded.³ In reality not more than five hundred of Farnese's army lost their lives,⁴ and although the town,

slam upon Leicester's arrival. The wrangling between Leicester and his officers, and between them all and the States, offended the young soldier so much that he was anxious to leave the Netherlands. "Bravely was Nuys defended by Kloet, but evil relieved by us," he wrote to his father. "Our affairs here be such as that which we conclude overnight is broke in the morning; we agree not one with another, but we are divided in many factions, so as if the enemy were as strong as we are factious and irresolute, I think we should make shipwreck of the cause this summer." Sir T. Cecil to Lord Burghley, $\frac{21}{31}$ July, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

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¹ Leicester to Burghley, $\frac{10}{20}$ Aug. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 260, 264, 299, 303.

³ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 363. "He has lost 3,000 of his soldiers and as many hurt." (!). Leicester to Walsingham, 27 July, 1586. "Of the enemy not less than 3,000 slain," said North, 26 July, MS. *ubi supra*. "The town is gone, clean burnt to the ground," wrote Leicester to Burghley, "and to the number of 4,000 dead in the ditches." Letter of $\frac{29}{29}$ July. MS. *ubi supra*.

⁴ North to Burghley, $\frac{12}{22}$ Aug. MS.

excepting some churches, had certainly been destroyed; yet the Prince was now master of the Rhine as far as Cologne, and of the Meuse as far as Grave. The famine which pressed so sorely upon him, might now be relieved, and his military communications with Germany be considered secure.

The conqueror now turned his attention to Rheinberg, twenty-five miles farther down the river.¹

Sir Philip Sidney had not been well satisfied by the comparative idleness in which, from these various circumstances, he had been compelled to remain. Early in the spring he had been desirous of making an attack upon Flanders by capturing the town of Steenberg. The faithful Roger Williams had strongly seconded the proposal. "We wish to show your Excellency," said he to Leicester, "that we are not sound asleep."² The Welshman was not likely to be accused of somnolence, but on this occasion Sidney and himself had been overruled. At a later moment, and during the siege of Neusz, Sir Philip had the satisfaction of making a successful foray into Flanders.

The expedition had been planned by Prince Maurice of Nassau, and was his earliest military achievement. He proposed carrying by surprise the city of Axel, a well-built, strongly-fortified town on the south-western edge of the great Scheldt estuary, and very important from its position. Its acquisition would make the hold of the patriots and the English upon Sluys and Ostend more secure, and give them many opportunities of annoying the enemy in Flanders.

Early in July, Maurice wrote to the Earl of Leicester, communicating the particulars of his scheme, but begging that the affair might be "very secretly handled," and kept from every one but Sidney. Leicester accordingly sent his nephew to Maurice that they might consult together upon the enterprise, and make sure "that there was no ill intent, there being

¹ Bor, Hoofd, Meteren, Strada, *ubi supra*.

² Williams to Leicester, $\frac{17}{27}$ Feb.

1586. (Brit. Mus. Galba, C. ix. p. 85 MS.)

so much treachery in the world.”¹ Sidney found no treachery in young Maurice, but only a noble and intelligent love of adventure, and the two arranged their plans in harmony.

Leicester, then, in order to deceive the enemy, came to Bergen-op-Zoom, with five hundred men, where he remained two days, not sleeping a wink, as he averred, during 16, 17 July, the whole time. In the night of Tuesday, 16th of 1586. July, the five hundred English soldiers were despatched by water, under charge of Lord Willoughby, “who,” said the Earl, “would needs go with them.” Young Hatton, too, son of Sir Christopher, also volunteered on the service, “as his first nursling.”² Sidney had five hundred of his own Zeeland regiment in readiness, and the rendezvous was upon the broad waters of the Scheldt, opposite Flushing.³ The plan was neatly carried out, and the united flotilla, in a dark, calm, midsummer’s night, rowed across the smooth estuary and landed at Ter Neuse, about a league from Axel. Here they were joined by Maurice with some Netherland companies, and the united troops, between two and three thousand strong, marched at once to the place proposed. Before two in the morning they had reached Axel, but found the moat very deep. Forty soldiers immediately plunged in, however, carrying their ladders with them, swam across, scaled the rampart, killed the guard, whom they found asleep in their beds, and opened the gates for their comrades. The whole force then marched in, the Dutch companies under Colonel Pyron being first, Lord Willoughby’s men being second, and Sir Philip with his Zeelanders bringing up the rear.⁴ The garrison, between five and six hundred in number, though surprised, resisted gallantly, and were all put to the sword. Of the

¹ Leicester to the Queen, $\frac{8}{18}$ July, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Bruce’s ‘Lyc. Corresp.’ 338.

³ “Before Flushing, upon the water, that it might be less noted.” Leicester to the Queen, MS. before cited.

⁴ Sir T. Cecil to Lord Burghley, $\frac{8}{18}$

July, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

Leicester, however, says, “My nephew Sidney, with his band, would needs have the first entry, as the messenger told me” (Letter to the Queen, *ubi sup.*); but the messenger seems to have been mistaken.

invaders, not a single man lost his life. Sidney most generously rewarded from his own purse the adventurous soldiers who had swum the moat; and it was to his care and intelligence that the success of Prince Maurice's scheme was generally attributed. The achievement was hailed with great satisfaction, and it somewhat raised the drooping spirits of the patriots after their severe losses at Grave and Venlo. "This victory hath happened in good time," wrote Thomas Cecil to his father, "and hath made us somewhat to lift up our heads."¹ A garrison of eight hundred, under Colonel Pyron, was left in Axel, and the dykes around were then pierced. Upwards of two millions' worth of property in grass, cattle, corn, was thus immediately destroyed² in the territory of the obedient Netherlands.

After an unsuccessful attempt to surprise Gravelines,³ the governor of which place, the veteran La Motte, was not so easily taken napping, Sir Philip having gained much reputation by this conquest of Axel, then joined the main body of the army, under Leicester, at Arnheim.⁴

Yet, after all, Sir Philip had not grown in favour with her Majesty during his service in the Low Countries. He had also been disappointed in the government of Zeeland, to which post his uncle had destined him. The cause of Leicester's ambition had been frustrated by the policy of Barneveld and Buys, in pursuance of which Count or Prince Maurice—as he was now purposely designated, in order that his rank might surpass that of the Earl⁵—had become stadholder and captain-

¹ Cecil to Burghley, *ubi supra*.

² Leicester to Burghley, 29 July
8 Aug.

1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

"Your Lordship will not believe how the town of Axel is like to annoy these parts. There is already so much corn, cattle, and grass destroyed, as is worth two millions of florins."

³ Meteren, xiii. 236^{vo}.

⁴ Letters of Leicester and of Sir T. Cecil above cited. Compare Meteren, xiii. 236. Brooke's Life of Sidney, II. 15. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 181, 182; Bor,

II. 738; Wagenaar, viii. 134. Bruce's 'Leyce. Corresp.' 337, 338.

⁵ His elder brother, Philip William, son of William the Silent, by his first wife Anna de Buren, was Prince of Orange, but was still detained captive in Spain. The title of Prince was given by courtesy to Maurice, on the ground that in Germany all the sons succeeded to the father's title. As the principality of Orange was not in Germany, and as the title of William in that country was only that of Count, it was difficult to see any claim

general both of Holland and Zeeland. The Earl had given his nephew, however, the colonelcy of the Zeeland regiment, vacant by the death of Admiral Haultain on the Kowenstyn Dyke. This promotion had excited much anger among the high officers in the Netherlands, who, at the instigation of Count Hohenlo, had presented a remonstrance upon the subject to the governor-general. It had always been the custom, they said, with the late Prince of Orange, to confer promotion according to seniority, without regard to social rank, and they were therefore unwilling that a young foreigner, who had just entered the service, should thus be advanced over the heads of veterans who had been campaigning there so many weary years.¹ At the same time the gentlemen who signed the paper protested to Sir Philip, in another letter, "with all the same hands," that they had no personal feeling towards him, but, on the contrary, that they wished him all honour."²

Young Maurice himself had always manifested the most friendly feelings toward Sidney, although influenced in his action by the statesmen who were already organizing a powerful opposition to Leicester. "Count Maurice showed himself constantly kind in the matter of the regiment," said Sir Philip, "but Mr. Paul Buss has so many busses in his head, such as you shall find he will be to God and man about one pitch. Happy is the communication of them that join in the fear of God."³ Hohenlo, too, or Hollock, as he was called by the French and English, was much governed by Buys and Olden-Barneveld. Reckless and daring, but loose of life and uncertain of purpose, he was most dangerous, unless under safe guidance. Roger Williams—who vowed that but for the love he bore to Sidney and Leicester, he would not remain ten days in the Netherlands—was much disgusted by Hohenlo's conduct in regard to the Zeeland regiment. "Tis a mutinous request of Hollock," said he, "that strangers should not command Netherlanders. He and his Alemaynes are

of Maurice to be entitled Prince so long as his brother was alive. Leicester always considered his assumption of this superior rank as a personal affront to himself.

¹ Sidney to Davison, 24 Feb. 1586.

(Brit. Mus. Galba C. ix. 75, MS.) Compare letters of Hohenlo in Bor, III. 123 *seq.* Hoofd, Vervolgh, 156, 157, Wagenaar, viii. 129.

² Sidney to Davison, *ubi supra*.

³ Ibid.

farther born from Zeeland than Sir Philip is. Either you must make Hollock assured to you, or you must disgrace him. If he will not be yours, I will show you means to disinherit him of all his commands at small danger. What service doth he, Count Solms, Count Overstein, with their Almaynes, but spend treasure and consume great contributions ? ”¹

It was very natural that the chivalrous Sidney, who had come to the Netherlands to win glory in the field, should be desirous of posts that would bring danger and distinction with them. He was not there merely that he might govern Flushing, important as it was, particularly as the garrison was, according to his statement, about as able to maintain the town, “as the Tower was to answer for London.” He disapproved of his wife’s inclination to join him in Holland, for he was likely—so he wrote to her father, Walsingham—“to run such a course as would not be fit for any of the feminine gender.”² He had been, however, grieved to the heart, by the spectacle which was perpetually exhibited of the Queen’s parsimony, and of the consequent suffering of the soldiers. Twelve or fifteen thousand Englishmen were serving in the Netherlands—more than two thirds of them in her Majesty’s immediate employment. No troops had ever fought better, or more honourably maintained the ancient glory of England. But rarely had more ragged and wretched warriors been seen than they, after a few months’ campaigning.

The Irish Kernes—some fifteen hundred of whom were among the auxiliaries—were better off, for they habitually dispensed with clothing ; an apron from waist to knee being the only protection of these wild Kelts, who fought with the valour, and nearly in the costume of Homeric heroes. Fearing nothing, needing nothing, sparing nothing, they stalked about the fens of Zeeland upon their long stilts, or leaped across running rivers, scaling ramparts, robbing the highways, burning, butchering, and maltreating the villages and their inhabitants, with as little regard for the laws of Christian warfare as for those of civilized costume.³

¹ R. Williams to Leicester, $\frac{17}{x}$ Feb. 1586. (Brit. Mus. Galba, C. ix. 85. MS.)

² Letters in Gray’s Life of Sydney, 291.

³ Reynd, v. 101. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 220. Strada, II. 446.

Other soldiers, more sophisticated as to apparel, were less at their ease. The generous Sidney spent all his means, and loaded himself with debt, in order to relieve the necessities of the poor soldiers. He protested that if the Queen would not pay her troops, she would lose her troops, but that no living man should say the fault was in him. "What relief I can do them I will," he wrote to his father-in-law; "I will spare no danger, if occasion serves. I am sure that no creature shall lay injustice to my charge."¹

Very soon it was discovered that the starving troops had to contend not only with the Queen's niggardliness but with the dishonesty of her agents. Treasurer Norris was constantly accused by Leicester and Sidney of gross speculation. Five per cent., according to Sir Philip, was lost to the Zeeland soldiers in every payment, "and God knows," he said, "they want no such hindrance, being scarce able to keep life with their entire pay. Truly it is but poor increase to her Majesty, considering what loss it is to the miserable soldier." Discipline and endurance were sure to be sacrificed, in the end, to such short-sighted economy. "When soldiers," said Sidney, "grow to despair, and give up towns, then it is too late to buy with hundred thousands what might have been saved with a trifle."²

This plain dealing, on the part of Sidney, was anything but agreeable to the Queen, who was far from feeling regret that his high-soaring expectations had been somewhat blighted in the Provinces. He often expressed his mortification that her Majesty was disposed to interpret everything to his disadvantage. "I understand," said he, "that I am called ambitious, and very proud at home, but certainly, if they knew my heart, they would not altogether so judge me."³ Elizabeth had taken part with Hohenlo against Sir Philip in the matter of the Zeeland regiment, and in this perhaps she was not entirely to be blamed. But she inveighed needlessly against his ambitious seeking of the office, and—as Walsingham observed—"she was very apt, upon every light occasion,

¹ Letters, in Gray, 290.

² Ibid. 214, 321.

³ Ibid. 290. Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 345.

to find fault with him.”¹ It is probable that his complaints against the army treasurer, and his manful defence of the “miserable soldiers,” more than counterbalanced, in the Queen’s estimation, his chivalry in the field.

Nevertheless he had now the satisfaction of having gained an important city in Flanders ; and on subsequently joining the army under his uncle, he indulged the hope of earning still greater distinction.

Martin Schenk had meanwhile been successfully defending Rheinberg, for several weeks, against Parma’s forces. It was necessary, however, that Leicester, notwithstanding the impoverished condition of his troops, should make some diversion, while his formidable antagonist was thus carrying all before him.

He assembled, accordingly, in the month of August, all the troops that could be brought into the field, and reviewed them, with much ceremony, in the neighbourhood of Arnheim. His army barely numbered seven thousand foot and two thousand horse,² but he gave out, very extensively, that he had fourteen thousand under his command,³ and he was moreover expecting a force of three thousand reiters, and as many pikemen recently levied in Germany. Lord Essex was general of the cavalry, Sir William Pelham⁴—a distinguished

¹ Letters, in Gray, &c., just cited.

² Leicester to the Queen, 11 Oct. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.) Huddleston to Burghley, 6 Sept. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Ibid. Compare Strada, who states the number of Leicester’s forces at 13,000 foot and 2,000 horse, besides reinforcements of 1,000 English and Scotch who were shortly expected. Bor. II. 738. Wagenaar, viii. 135.

⁴ Sir William Pelham had been out of favour with the Queen for many months. He had been held responsible for some abuses in the ordnance office, and a heavy claim made upon him by the crown had reduced him to insolvency. The Queen was excessively indignant at his conduct, and refused for a long time to allow him to accept the responsible post under Leicester which the Earl was anxious to confer upon him. Leicester,

who was the most generous of men, sent him large sums of money to extricate him from his difficulties, but it was many months before the Queen relented. The Earl had an exalted opinion of Pelham’s military capacity, knew him to be one of his own most devoted adherents, and earnestly desired his support to keep down the hostility and insubordination of Sir John Norris and his brothers. “I begin to be prettily accompanied now with men,” he wrote to the Queen, “only lacking governors and leaders, especially a marshal. I must still say to your Majesty it had been better to have wanted the use of 20,000 than the service of Sir W. Pelham here thus long. It is not only an insufferable want to all our people, but the enemy hath bragged of it. I do assure your Majesty, by the allegiance I owe you, I know the Prince of Parma hath

soldier, who had recently arrived out of England, after the most urgent solicitations to the Queen, for that end, by Leicester—was lord-marshal of the camp, and Sir John Norris was colonel-general of the infantry.

After the parade, two sermons were preached upon the hill-side to the soldiers, and then there was a council of war. It was decided—notwithstanding the Earl's announcement of his intentions to attack Parma in person—that the condition of the army did not warrant such an enterprise. It was thought better to lay siege to Zutphen. This step, if successful, would place in the power of the republic and her ally a city of great importance and strength. In every event the attempt would probably compel Farnese to raise the siege of Berg.

Leicester, accordingly, with "his brave troop of able and likely men"¹—five thousand of the infantry being English—advanced as far as Doesburg. This city, seated at the confluence of the ancient canal of Drusus and the Yssel, five miles above Zutphen, it was necessary, as a preliminary measure, to secure. It was not a very strong place, ^{30 Aug. 1586.} being rather slightly walled with brick, and with a ^{9 Sept.} foss drawing not more than three feet of water.² By the 30th August it had been completely invested.

spoken it some months past, that he was sure neither Pelham nor the Lord Grey should come, *nor that any more men by your license or muster should pass, which falls out somewhat to be true, to our discomfort.* But if either Pelham or Lord Grey, or rather both may come, I trust your Majesty shall reap the greatest honour and good by it; but first Sir William, for he is readiest. *For God's sake and your honour's sake, let him come.* We have now some numbers increased, but no man fit for such a government as Sir W. Pelham is. I beseech your Majesty *trust me, and believe me there is not one, no, not one for it, whatsoever you have heard or may hear, or of whomsoever, that I know to be employed at this time here. I find it, I feel it, to my great hindrance and no less danger every day. I know here be worthy and very valiant gentlemen, but for*

so great a charge, believe me, *there is not one yet here for it.* I am loath to hinder any man. It hath not been my custom to your Majesty. I beseech you that all men may have their deserts, and your poor army here comforted. Let all the haste possible be used with Sir W. Pelham, on whose coming with that worthy gentleman Sir W. Stanley, I trust your Majesty shall hear well of us," &c. &c. It was natural that Sir John Norris should be indignant at being supplanted by Pelham, and their mutual rivalry did infinite mischief. Leicester to the Queen, ¹⁴ June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.) Compare 'Leyc. Corresp.' 37, 44, 55, 125.

¹ Huddleston to Burghley, MS. be fore cited.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

On the same night, at ten o'clock, Sir William Pelham came to the Earl to tell him "what beastly pioneers the Dutchmen were." Leicester accordingly determined, notwithstanding the lord-marshal's entreaties, to proceed to the trenches in person. There being but faint light, the two lost their way, and soon found themselves nearly at the gate of the town. Here, while groping about in the dark, and trying to effect their retreat, they were saluted with a shot, which struck Sir William in the stomach. For an instant, thinking himself mortally injured, he expressed his satisfaction that he had been between the commander-in-chief and the blow, and made other "comfortable and resolute speeches." Very fortunately, however, it proved that the marshal was not seriously hurt, and, after a few days, he was about his work as usual, although obliged—as the Earl of Leicester expressed it—"to carry a bullet in his belly as long as he should live."¹

Roger Williams, too, that valiant adventurer—"but no more valiant than wise, and worth his weight in gold," according to the appreciative Leicester—was shot through the arm. For the dare-devil Welshman, much to the Earl's regret, persisted in running up and down the trenches "with a great plume of feathers in his gilt morion," and in otherwise making a very conspicuous mark of himself "within point-blank of a caliver."²

Notwithstanding these mishaps, however, the siege went successfully forward. Upon the 2nd September the Earl
 Friday, began to batter, and after a brisk cannonade, from
² Sept. dawn till two in the afternoon, he had consider-
¹² 1586. ably damaged the wall in two places. One of the
 breaches was eighty feet wide, the other half as large, but the
 besieged had stuffed them full of beds, tubs, logs of wood,
 boards, and "such like trash," by means whereof the ascent
 was not so easy as it seemed.³ The soldiers were excessively
 eager for the assault. Sir John Norris came to Leicester to
 receive his orders as to the command of the attacking party.

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Ceresp., 401, 407.

² Ibid.

³ Huddleston to Burghley, ⁶/₁₂ Sept. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

The Earl referred the matter to him. "There is no man," answered Sir John, "fitter for that purpose than myself; for I am colonel-general of the infantry."¹

But Leicester, not willing to indulge so unreasonable a proposal, replied that he would reserve him for service of less hazard and greater importance. Norris being, as usual, "*satis prodigus magnæ animæ*,"² was out of humour at the refusal, and ascribed it to the Earl's persistent hostility to him and his family. It was then arranged that the assault upon the principal breach should be led by younger officers, to be supported by Sir John and other veterans. The other breach was assigned to the Dutch and Scotch—black Norris scowling at them the while with jealous eyes; fearing that they might get the start of the English party, and be first to enter the town.³ A party of noble volunteers clustered about Sir John—Lord Burgh, Sir Thomas Cecil, Sir Philip Sidney, and his brother Robert among the rest—most impatient for the signal. The race was obviously to be a sharp one. The governor-general forbade these violent demonstrations, but Lord Burgh, "in a most vehement passion, waived the countermand,"⁴ and his insubordination was very generally imitated. Before the signal was given, however, Leicester sent a trumpet to summon the town to surrender, and ¹²Sept. could with difficulty restrain his soldiers till the 1586. answer should be returned. To the universal disappointment, the garrison agreed to surrender. Norris himself then stepped forward to the breach, and cried aloud the terms, lest the returning herald, who had been sent back by Leicester, should offer too favourable a capitulation.⁵ It was arranged that the soldiers should retire without arms, with white wands in their hands—the officers remaining prisoners—and that the burghers, their lives, and property, should be at Leicester's disposal.⁶ The Earl gave most peremptory orders that persons and goods should be respected, but his commands were dis-

¹ MS. last cited.² Ibid.³ Ibid.⁴ Ibid.

⁵ "Lest the trumpet should offer too largely, I stepped to the breach myself and proposed the conditions," &c. Sir John Norris to Mr. Wilkes,

⁶ Sept. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)
16

⁶ Leicester to the Privy Council.

³ Sept. 1586. Sir J. Norris to Wilkes,
13
ubi sup. (S. P. Office MS.)

obeyed. Sir William Stanley's men committed frightful disorders, and thoroughly rifled the town."

"And because," said Norris, "I found fault herewith, Sir William began to quarrel with me, hath braved me extremely, refuseth to take any direction from me, and although I have sought for redress, yet it is proceeded in so coldly, that he taketh encouragement rather to increase the quarrel than to leave it."¹

Notwithstanding therefore the decree of Leicester, the expostulations and anger of Norris, and the energetic efforts of Lord Essex and other generals, who went about smiting the marauders on the head, the soldiers sacked the city, and committed various disorders, in spite of the capitulation.²

Doesburg having been thus reduced, the Earl now proceeded toward the more important city which he had determined to besiege. Zutphen, or South-Fen, an antique town of wealth and elegance, was the capital of the old Landgraves of Zutphen. It is situate on the right bank of the Yssel, that branch of the Rhine which flows between Gelderland and Overijssel into the Zuyder-Zee.

The ancient river, broad, deep, and languid, glides through a plain of almost boundless extent, till it loses itself in the flat and misty horizon. On the other side of the stream, in the district called the Veluwe,³ or bad meadow, were three sconces, one of them of remarkable strength. An island between the city and the shore was likewise well fortified. On the landward side the town was protected by a wall and moat sufficiently strong in those infant days of artillery. Near the hospital-gate, on the east, was an external fortress guarding the road to Warnsfeld. This was a small village,

¹ Norris to Wilkes, MS.

² Huddleston to Burghley, 3 Sept. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.) Leicester to Privy Council, 6 Sept. 1586. (S. P. Off. MS.) Sir John Norris to Wilkes, 6 Sept. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.) Compare Hooft, *Vervolgh*, 184. Bor, II. 750. Stowe, 736. Bruce's *Leyc. Corresp.* 406, 407.

The town was "rifled," but it was "but poor, with nothing to answer the

need and greediness of the soldiers," said Huddleston, adding that "divers disorders were committed, as in such cases it happeneth, though (God be thanked) none specially notorious."

³ Veluwe, 'bad meadow,' in opposition to Betuwe (*Batavia*), 'good meadow.' Bet is the positive, now obsolete in German, Dutch, and English, of the comparative, better.

with a solitary slender church-spire, shooting up above a cluster of neat one-storied houses. It was about an English mile from Zutphen, in the midst of a wide, low, somewhat fenny plain, which, in winter, became so completely a lake, that peasants were not unfrequently drowned in attempting to pass from the city to the village. In summer, the vague expanse of country was fertile and cheerful of aspect. Long rows of poplars marking the straight highways, clumps of pollard willows scattered around the little meres, snug farm-houses, with kitchen-gardens and brilliant flower-patches dotting the level plain, verdant pastures sweeping off into seemingly infinite distance, where the innumerable cattle seemed to swarm like insects, wind-mills swinging their arms in all directions, like protective giants, to save the country from inundation, the lagging sail of market-boats shining through rows of orchard trees—all gave to the environs of Zutphen a tranquil and domestic charm.

Deventer and Kampen, the two other places on the river, were in the hands of the States. It was, therefore, desirable for the English and the patriots, by gaining possession of Zutphen, to obtain control of the Yssel; driven, as they had been, from the Meuse and Rhine.

Sir John Norris, by Leicester's direction, took possession of a small rising-ground, called 'Gibbet Hill,' on the land-side, where he established a fortified camp, and proceeded to invest the city. With him were Count Lewis William of Nassau, and Sir Philip Sidney, while the Earl himself, crossing the Yssel on a bridge of boats which he had constructed, reserved for himself the reduction of the forts upon the Veluwe side.

Farnese, meantime, was not idle; and Leicester's calculations proved correct. So soon as the Prince was informed of this important demonstration of the enemy he broke up—after brief debate with his officers—his camp before Rheinberg, and came to Wesel.¹ At this place he built a bridge over the Rhine, and fortified it with two block-houses. These he placed under command of Claude Berlot, who was ordered to watch strictly all communication up the river with

¹ Strada, IL 448.

the city of Rheinberg, which he thus kept in a partially beleaguered state. Alexander then advanced rapidly by way of Groll and Burik, both which places he took possession of, to the neighbourhood of Zutphen. He was determined, at every hazard, to relieve that important city; and although, after leaving necessary detachments on the way, he had but five thousand men under his command, besides fifteen hundred under Verdugo—making sixty-five hundred in all—he had decided that the necessity of the case, and his own honour, required him to seek the enemy, and to leave, as he said, the issue with the God of battles, whose cause it was.¹

Tassis, lieutenant-governor of Gelderland, was ordered into the city with two cornets of horse and six hundred foot. As large a number had already been stationed there. Verdugo, who had been awaiting the arrival of the Prince at Borkelo, a dozen miles from Zutphen, with four hundred foot and two hundred horse, now likewise entered the city.²

On the night of 29th August (St. Nov.) Alexander himself entered Zutphen for the purpose of encouraging the garrison
 29 Aug. by promise of relief, and of ascertaining the position
 1586. of the enemy by personal observation. His presence as it always did, inspired the soldiers with enthusiasm, so that they could with difficulty be restrained from rushing forth to assault the besiegers.³ In regard to the enemy he found that Gibbet Hill was still occupied by Sir John Norris, “the best soldier, in his opinion, that they had,”⁴ who had entrenched himself very strongly, and was supposed to have thirty-five hundred men under his command. His position seemed quite impregnable. The rest of the English were on the other side of the river, and Alexander observed, with satisfaction, that they had abandoned a small redoubt, near the leper-house, outside the Loor-Gate, through which the reinforcements must enter the city. The Prince determined to profit by this mistake, and to seize the opportunity thus afforded of sending those much needed supplies. During the night the enemy were found to be throwing up works “most

¹ Parma to Philip, 30 Oct. 1586. (Arch. de Simarcas, MS.)

² Ibid. Compare Strada, II. 448, 450.

³ Letter to Philip, *ubi sup.*

⁴ Ibid.

furiously,"¹ and skirmishing parties were sent out of the town to annoy them. In the darkness nothing of consequence was effected, but a Scotch officer was captured, who informed the Spanish commander that the enemy was fifteen thousand strong—a number which was nearly double that of Leicester's actual force. In the morning Alexander returned to his camp at Borkelo—leaving Tassis in command of the Veluwe Forts, and Verdugo in the city itself—and he at once made rapid work in collecting victuals. He had soon wheat and other supplies in readiness, sufficient to feed four thousand mouths for three months, and these he determined to send into the city immediately, and at every hazard.

The great convoy which was now to be despatched required great care and a powerful escort. Twenty-five hundred musketeers and pikemen, of whom one thousand were Spaniards, and six hundred cavalry, Epirotes, Spaniards, and Italians, under Hannibal Gonzaga, George Crescia, ^{1 Oct., n.s.,} Bentivoglio, Sesa, and others, were accordingly de- ^{1586.}tailed for this expedition.² The Marquis del Vasto, to whom was entrusted the chief command, was ordered to march from Borkelo at midnight on Wednesday, October 1 (St. Nov.). It was calculated that he would reach a certain hillock not far from Warnsfeld by dawn of day. Here he was to pause, and send forward an officer towards the town, communicating his arrival, and requesting the cooperation of Verdugo, who was to make a sortie with one thousand men, according to Alexander's previous arrangements. The plan was successfully carried out. The Marquis arrived by daybreak at the spot indicated, and despatched Captain de Vega who contrived to send intelligence of the fact. A trooper, whom Parma had himself sent to Verdugo with earlier information of the movement, had been captured on the way. Leicester had therefore been apprized, at an early moment, of the Prince's intentions,

¹ Parma to Philip, "a furia." MS. before cited.

² These are Parma's own figures. (Letter to Philip, as above.) Every historian gives a different statement

one from another. Leicester declared that Crescia told him, "upon his honour, that there were fifteen cornets of horse and 3,000 foot." Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 417.

but he was not aware that the convoy would be accompanied by so strong a force as had really been detailed.

He had accordingly ordered Sir John Norris, who commanded on the outside of the town near the road which the Spaniards must traverse, to place an ambuscade in his way. Sir John, always ready for adventurous enterprises, took a body of two hundred cavalry, all picked men, and ordered Sir William Stanley, with three hundred pikemen, to follow. A much stronger force of infantry was held in reserve and readiness, but it was not thought that it would be required. The ambuscade was successfully placed, before the dawn of *Oct. 2, N.S., Thursday morning, in the neighbourhood of Warns-
1586. feld church. On the other hand, the Earl of Leicester himself, anxious as to the result, came across the river just at daybreak. He was accompanied by the chief gentlemen in his camp, who could never be restrained when blows were passing current.

The business that morning was a commonplace and practical though an important, one—to “impeach” a convoy of wheat and barley, butter, cheese, and beef—but the names of those noble and knightly volunteers, familiar throughout Christendom, sound like the roll-call for some chivalrous tournament. There were Essex and Audley, Stanley, Pelham, Russell, both the Sidneys, all the Norrises, men whose valour had been proved on many a hard-fought battle-field. There, too, was the famous hero of British ballad whose name was so often to ring on the plains of the Netherlands—

“The brave Lord Willoughby,
Of courage fierce and fell,
Who would not give one inch of way
For all the devils in hell.”

Twenty such volunteers as these sat on horseback that morning around the stately Earl of Leicester. It seemed an incredible extravagance to send a handful of such heroes against an army.

But the English commander-in-chief had been listening

* Thursday, ^{September 22}
October 3, 1586.

to the insidious tongue of Roland York—that bold, plausible, unscrupulous partisan, already twice a renegade, of whom more was ere long to be heard in the Netherlands and England. Of the man's courage there could be no doubt, and he was about to fight that morning in the front rank at the head of his company. But he had, for some mysterious reason, been bent upon persuading the Earl that the Spaniards were no match for Englishmen at a hand-to-hand contest. When they could ride freely up and down, he said, and use their lances as they liked, they were formidable. But the English were stronger men, better riders, better mounted, and better armed. The Spaniards hated helmets and proof armour, while the English trooper, in casque, cuirass, and greaves, was a living fortress impregnable to Spanish or Italian light horsemen. And Leicester seemed almost convinced by his reasoning.¹

It was five o'clock of a chill autumn morning. It was time for day to break, but the fog was so thick that a man at the distance of five yards was quite invisible. The creaking of waggon-wheels and the measured tramp of soldiers soon became faintly audible however to Sir John Norris and his five hundred as they sat there in the mist. Presently came galloping forward in hot haste those nobles and gentlemen, with their esquires, fifty men in all—Sidney, Willoughby, and the rest—whom Leicester had no longer been able to restrain from taking part in the adventure.

A force of infantry, the amount of which cannot be satisfactorily ascertained, had been ordered by the Earl to cross the bridge at a later moment. Sidney's cornet of horse was then in Deventer, to which place it had been sent in order to assist in quelling an anticipated revolt, so that he came, like most of his companions, as a private volunteer and knight-errant.

¹ Rayd, v. 62, 88. Bor. II. 750, 751, Compare Meteren, xiii. 237, who says that York was suspected of being secretly in league with Farnese, to contrive this ambushade, and thus to bring so many English nobles of distinction to death or captivity. There

is no doubt that when he deserted the Spanish for the English party, he pledged himself to Parma to do him good service, and that he was always secretly in league with the enemy. We shall see at a later day whether he was ready to redeem his pledge.

The arrival of the expected convoy was soon more distinctly heard, but no scouts or outposts had been stationed to give timely notice of the enemy's movements.¹ Suddenly the fog, which had shrouded the scene so closely, rolled away like a curtain, and in the full light of an October morning the Englishmen found themselves face to face with a compact body of more than three thousand men. The Marquis del Vasto rode at the head of the force, surrounded by a band of mounted arquebus men. The cavalry, under the famous Epirote chief George Crescia, Hannibal Gonzaga, Bentivoglio, Sesa, Conti, and other distinguished commanders, followed; the columns of pikemen and musketeers lined the hedge-rows on both sides the causeway; while between them the long train of waggons came slowly along under their protection.² The whole force had got in motion after having sent notice of their arrival to Verdugo, who, with one or two thousand men, was expected to sally forth almost immediately from the city-gate.

There was but brief time for deliberation. Notwithstanding the tremendous odds there was no thought of retreat. Black Norris called to Sir William Stanley, with whom he had been at variance so lately at Doesburg.

"There hath been ill-blood between us," he said. "Let us be friends together this day, and die side by side, if need be, in her Majesty's cause."

"If you see me not serve my prince with faithful courage now," replied Stanley, "account me for ever a coward. Living or dying I will stand or lie by you in friendship."

As they were speaking these words the young Earl of Essex, general of the horse, cried to his handful of troopers:—

"Follow me, good fellows, for the honour of England and of England's Queen!"³

As he spoke he dashed, lance in rest, upon the enemy's cavalry, overthrew the foremost man, horse and rider, shivered his own spear to splinters, and then, swinging his curtel-axe, rode merrily forward.⁴ His whole little troop, compact as an

¹ Hoofd, Vervolgh, 186.

² Parma to Philip II. 30 Oct. 1586.
(Arch. de Simancas, MS.) Compare

Strada, II. 450, 452. Bentivoglio,
P. II. L. iv. 311. Bor, II. 750, 751.

³ Archer, in Stowe, 736. ⁴ Ibid.

arrow-head, flew with an irresistible shock against the opposing columns, pierced clean through them, and scattered them in all directions. At the very first charge one hundred English horsemen drove the Spanish and Albanian cavalry back upon the musketeers and pikemen. Wheeling with rapidity, they retired before a volley of musket-shot, by which many horses and a few riders were killed, and then formed again to renew the attack. Sir Philip Sidney, on coming to the field, having met Sir William Pelham, the veteran lord marshal, lightly armed, had with chivalrous extravagance thrown off his own cuishes, and now rode to the battle with no armour but his cuirass.¹ At the second charge his horse was shot under him, but, mounting another, he was seen everywhere in the thick of the fight, behaving himself with a gallantry which extorted admiration even from the enemy.

For the battle was a series of personal encounters in which high officers were doing the work of private soldiers. Lord North, who had been lying "bed-rid" with a musket-shot in the leg, had got himself put on horseback, and "with one boot on and one boot off," bore himself "most lustily" through the whole affair.² "I desire that her Majesty may know," he said, "that I live but to serve her. A better barony than I have could not hire the Lord North to live on meaner terms."³ Sir William Russell laid about him with his curtel-axe to such purpose that the Spaniards pronounced him a devil and not a man. "Wherever," said an eye-witness, "he saw five or six of the enemy together, thither would he; and with his hard knocks soon separated their friendship."⁴ Lord Willoughby encountered George Crescia, general of the famed Albanian cavalry, unhorsed him at the first shock,⁵ and rolled him into the ditch. "I yield me thy prisoner," called out the Epirote in French, "for thou art a *preux chevalier*;" while Willoughby, trusting to his captive's word,

¹ Brooke's Sidney II. 31, 32.

² Archer, in Stowe, *ubi sup.* Bruce's
'Leyc. Corresp.' 417.

³ North to Burghley, ^{29 May}
8 June, 1586.
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(S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Archer, in Stowe, 737.

⁵ Ibid. Leicester to Burghley, Sept.
1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

galloped onward, and with him the rest of the little troop, till they seemed swallowed up by the superior numbers of the enemy. His horse was shot under him, his basses were torn from his legs, and he was nearly taken a prisoner, but fought his way back with incredible strength and good fortune. Sir William Stanley's horse had seven bullets in him, but bore his rider unhurt to the end of the battle. Leicester declared Sir William and "old Reade" to be "worth their weight in pearl."¹

Hannibal Gonzaga, leader of the Spanish cavalry, fell mortally wounded.² The Marquis del Vasto, commander of the expedition, nearly met the same fate. An Englishman was just cleaving his head with a battle-axe, when a Spaniard transfixed the soldier with his pike.³ The most obstinate struggle took place about the train of waggons. The teamsters had fled in the beginning of the action, but the English and Spanish soldiers, struggling with the horses, and pulling them forward and backward, tried in vain to get exclusive possession of the convoy which was the cause of the action.⁴ The carts at last forced their way slowly nearer and nearer to the town, while the combat still went on, warm as ever, between the hostile squadrons. The action lasted an hour and a half, and again and again the Spanish horsemen wavered and broke before the handful of English, and fell back upon their musketeers. Sir Philip Sidney, in the last charge, rode quite through the enemy's ranks till he came upon their entrenchments, when a musket-ball from the camp struck him upon the thigh, three inches above the knee. Although desperately wounded in a part which should have been protected by the cuishes which he had thrown aside, he was not inclined to leave the field; but his own horse had been shot under him at the beginning of the action, and the one

¹ "I will leave no labour nor danger," said Lord North, "but serve as a private soldier, and have thrust myself for service on foot under Captain Reade, whom I find a noble and notable soldier." (North to Burghley, MS. last cited.) This is the mettle the gallants of Elizabeth's court were made

of. Compare 'Leyce. Corresp.' 417.

² "The Count Hannibal Gonzaga was killed, with three others whose names we know not, but they had cassocks all embroidered and laced with silver and gold." Leicester to Burghley, Sept. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Strada, II. 452.

⁴ Ibid

upon which he was now mounted became too restive for him, thus crippled, to control. He turned reluctantly away, and rode a mile and a half back to the entrenchments, suffering extreme pain, for his leg was dreadfully shattered. As he past along the edge of the battle-field his attendants brought him a bottle of water to quench his raging thirst. At that moment a wounded English soldier, "who had eaten his last at the same feast," looked up wistfully in his face, when Sidney instantly handed him the flask, exclaiming, "Thy necessity is even greater than mine."¹ He then pledged his dying comrade in a draught, and was soon afterwards met by his uncle. "Oh, Philip," cried Leicester, in despair, "I am truly grieved to see thee in this plight." But Sidney comforted him with manful words, and assured him that death was sweet in the cause of his Queen and country. Sir William Russell, too, all blood-stained from the fight, threw his arms around his friend, wept like a child, and kissing his hand, exclaimed, "Oh! noble Sir Philip, never did man attain hurt so honourably or serve so valiantly as you."² Sir William Pelham declared "that Sidney's noble courage in the face of our enemies had won him a name of continuing honour."³

The wounded gentleman was borne back to the camp, and thence in a barge to Arnheim. The fight was over. Sir John Norris bade Lord Leicester "be merry, for," said he, "you have had the honourablest day. A handful of men has driven the enemy three times to retreat."⁴ But, in truth, it was now time for the English to retire in their turn. Their reserve never arrived. The whole force engaged against the thirty-five hundred Spaniards had never exceeded two hundred and fifty horse and three hundred foot, and of this number

¹ Brooke's Sidney, II. 32. It is to be regretted that Lord Brooke does not give the authority for this beautiful and universally cherished anecdote. I have searched in vain for its confirmation through many contemporary letters and chronicles. There is no reason for rejecting its authenticity, but it would have been an exquisite pleasure to find it recorded, for instance, in a letter from Pelham,

or North, or Norris, or Leicester—all of whom speak of Sidney's gallantry in the action, but not one of whom was acquainted with, or thought it worth while to mention the characteristic and touching trait.

² Stowe, 737.

³ Pelham to Walsingham, 28 Sept., 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Stowe, *ubi sup.*

the chief work had been done by the fifty or sixty volunteers and their followers.¹ The heroism which had been displayed was fruitless, except as a proof—and so Leicester wrote to the Palatine John Casimir—"that Spaniards were not invincible."² Two thousand men now sallied from the Loor-Gate, under Verdugo and Tassis,³ to join the force under Vasto, and the English were forced to retreat. The whole convoy was then carried into the city, and the Spaniards remained masters of the field.⁴

Thirteen troopers and twenty-two foot soldiers, upon the English side, were killed. The enemy lost perhaps two hundred men. They were thrice turned from their position, and thrice routed, but they succeeded at last in their attempt to carry their convoy into Zutphen. Upon that day, and the succeeding ones, the town was completely victualled. Very little, therefore, save honour, was gained by the display of English valour against overwhelming numbers—five hundred against near four thousand. Never in the whole course of the war had there been such

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 417.

² Reid, v. 83.

³ Parma to Philip, 30 Oct. 1586.

MS.

⁴ Ibid. Leicester observes in the letter to Burghley (Sept. —, 1586, S. P. Office MS.) that, "notwithstanding all these troops, the Prince did not put in one waggon, save thirty which got in in the night." Alexander, however, states expressly the reverse, and congratulates Philip on the entire success of the undertaking:—

"Pero nos debemos contentar con lo sucedido, pues allende de *haber quedado la campaña por nosotros, y salido con nuestra prelenion, y a la barba de tan buen numero con tanta poca gente (!) haber metido y sacado tanto carnage,*" &c. Letter to Philip, 30 Oct. 1586. MS.

There can be no doubt whatever that the Prince was entirely correct in his statement. The result proves it, if there could be any question of it before. It is difficult to see how Leicester could be mistaken, but he had a temptation to misrepresent an affair in which his own bad general-

ship had been as signal as the heroism which it had called forth. Certainly Zutphen, on that and the succeeding days, was thoroughly relieved. The errors, wilful or otherwise, as to the numbers engaged and respectively lost were greater on both sides than usual on such occasions, but this kind of misstatement has always been universal.

Compare Sidney Papers, I. 104, containing a letter of Leicester to Heneage; I have not found the original. Strada, II. 450, 452. Bor, II. 750, 751. Stowe, 737, 738. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 186, 187. Reid, v. 83, 84. Meteren, xiii. 237. Bentivoglio, P. II. L. IV. 311, *et mult. al.*

See also R. W. Tadam, *Geschiedenis der Stad Zutphen* ('Arnhem en Zutphen,' 1586), an interesting work, carefully written, and of great research; composed mainly from original unpublished documents. I desire to express my thanks to the learned author for the kindness with which he guided me over Zutphen and its neighbourhood, pointing out everything connected with the battle and the siege.

fighting, for the troops upon both sides were picked men and veterans. For a long time afterwards it was the custom of Spaniards and Netherlanders, in characterising a hardly-contested action, to call it as warm as the fight at Zutphen.¹

"I think I may call it," said Leicester, "the most notable encounter that hath been in our age, and it will remain to our posterity famous."²

Nevertheless it is probable that the encounter would have been forgotten by posterity but for the melancholy close upon that field to Sidney's bright career. And perhaps the Queen of England had as much reason to blush for the incompetency of her general and favourite as to be proud of the heroism displayed by her officers and soldiers.

"There were too many indeed at this skirmish of the better sort," said Leicester; "only a two hundred and fifty horse,

¹ Strada, II. 451.

² Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 416:—"That Thursday may run amongst any of our Thursdays," said the Earl, ('Leyc. Corresp.' 430), adding, with a most ingenuous reference to himself, "In my former letters I forgot *one*, who not only on that day but at every day's service hath been a *principal actor himself*. A tall, wise, rare servant he is, as any I know, and of marvellous good government and judgment. That gentleman may take a great charge upon him, I warrant you." Self-depreciation was not the Earl's foible.

There is hardly a battle on record about which the accounts are so hopelessly conflicting as are those which relate to the battle of Zutphen. The reason is obvious. The skirmish was a comparatively unimportant one. The fate of Sidney has invested it with undying interest, but it was not supposed at that time that he was mortally wounded. Lord North, whose letters are always spirited, went into the field in such a disabled condition that it was not in his power to send any account of the action, as he doubtless would otherwise have done, to Lord Burghley. Pelham, Norris, and Leicester, are all meagre on this occasion in details. Archer, in Stowe, is fuller, but Parma, in his letters to Philip, though copious, is confused.

As a specimen of conflicting statistics it may be observed that the number of English actually engaged, according to the statement of the commander-in-chief to his government, was 550, horse and foot together. The Spanish, according to Farnese's letter to Philip, was about 3,100 in all. Strada gives the same number, writing from other letters of Parma, and puts the English at 3000 foot and 400 horse, exactly the same number that is given in the MS. letters of Simancas, and about seven times as many as were really in the field. Leicester puts the Spaniards at 1,200 horse and 3,000 foot—about 1,000 more than the actual numbers. No doubt the numbers engaged on each side should be taken as correctly stated by the respective generals. There were therefore about 3,100 Spaniards to 550 English.

Leicester gives the number of killed and wounded as 33 English and from 250 to 350 Spaniards.

Parma states the number of Spaniards killed as 9 (?), wounded 29, while he reports 200 English killed.

It seems impossible that there could have been less than 150 or 200 Spaniards killed, which is not more than half the number claimed by Leicester on the authority of Spaniards themselves. But it is a waste of time to indulge in these fruitless calculations.

and most of them the best of this camp, and *unawares to me*. I was offended when I knew it, but could not fetch them back; but since they all so well escaped (save my dear nephew), I would not for ten thousand pounds but they had been there, since they have all won that honour they have. Your Lordship never heard of such desperate charges as they gave upon the enemies in the face of their muskets."¹

He described Sidney's wound as "very dangerous, the bone being broken in pieces;" but said that the surgeons were in good hope. "I pray God to save his life," said the Earl, "and I care not how lame he be." Sir Philip was carried to Arnheim, where the best surgeons were immediately in attendance upon him. He submitted to their examination and the pain which they inflicted, with great cheerfulness, although himself persuaded that his wound was mortal. For many days the result was doubtful, and messages were sent day by day to England that he was convalescent—intelligence which was hailed by the Queen and people as a matter not of private but of public rejoicing. He soon began to fail, however. Count Hohenlo was badly wounded a few days later before the great fort of Zutphen. A musket-ball entered his mouth, and passed through his cheek, carrying off a jewel which hung in his ear.² Notwithstanding his own critical condition, however, Hohenlo sent his surgeon, Adrian van den Spiegel, a man of great skill, to wait upon Sir Philip,³ but Adrian soon felt that the case was hopeless. Meantime fever and gangrene attacked the Count himself; and those in attendance upon him, fearing for his life, sent for his surgeon. Leicester refused to allow Adrian to depart, and Hohenlo very generously acquiescing in the decree, but, also requiring the surgeon's personal care, caused himself to be transported in a litter to Arnheim.⁴

Sidney was first to recognise the symptoms of mortification, which made a fatal result inevitable. His demeanour during his sickness and upon his death-bed was as beautiful as his

¹ Letter to Burghley, MS. before cited.

² Stowe, 738. Bor, II. 728.

³ Letter of Hohenlo, in Bor, III 123.

⁴ Letter of Hohenlo, in Bor, III 123

life. He discoursed with his friends concerning the immortality of the soul, comparing the doctrines of Plato and of other ancient philosophers, whose writings were so familiar to him, with the revelations of Scripture and with the dictates of natural religion. He made his will with minute and elaborate provisions, leaving bequests, remembrances, and rings, to all his friends. Then he indulged himself with music, and listened particularly to a strange song which he had himself composed during his illness, and which he had entitled 'La Cuisse rompue.' He took leave of the friends around him with perfect calmness, saying to his brother Robert, "Love my memory. Cherish my friends. Above all, govern your will and affections by the will and word of your Creator; in me beholding the end of this world with all her vanities."¹

And thus this gentle and heroic spirit took its flight.

Parma, after thoroughly victualling Zutphen, turned his attention to the German levies which Leicester was expecting under the care of Count Meurs. "If the enemy is reinforced by these six thousand fresh troops," said Alexander, "it will make him master of the field."² And well he might hold this opinion, for, in the meagre state of both the Spanish and the liberating armies, the addition of three thousand fresh reiters and as many infantry would be enough to turn the scale. The Duke of Parma—for, since the recent death of his father, Farnese had succeeded to his title³—determined in person to seek the German troops, and to destroy them if possible. But they never gave him the chance.⁴ Their muster-place was Bremen, but when they heard that the terrible 'Holofernese' was in pursuit of them, and that the commencement of their service would be a pitched battle with his Spaniards and Italians, they broke up and scattered about

¹ Brooke's Sidney, II. 32, 40. Sidney Papers, 104, seq.

² Parma to Philip, 30 Oct. 1586. Arch. de Simancas, MS.

³ Philip II. to Parma, 19 Oct. 1586. (Archiv. de Simancas, MS.) "Henceforth," said the King, "I will be both father and mother to you."

⁴ Bentivoglio is much mistaken (P. II. L. iv. 311) in giving an account of a pitched battle between Alexander and these mercenaries, in which they are represented as having been utterly defeated. The victory was quite bloodless, and it cost the victor only a couple of gold chains.

the country. Soon afterwards the Duke tried another method of effectually dispersing them, in case they still retained a wish to fulfil their engagement with Leicester. He sent a messenger to treat with them, and in consequence two of their 'rittmeisters' paid him a visit. He offered to give them higher pay, and "ready money in place of tricks and promises." The mercenary heroes listened very favourably to his proposals, although they had already received—besides the tricks and promises—at least one hundred thousand florins out of the States' treasury.²

After proceeding thus far in the negotiation, however, Parma concluded, as the season was so far advanced, that it was sufficient to have dispersed them, and to have deprived the English and patriots of their services. So he gave the two majors a gold chain a-piece, and they went their way thoroughly satisfied. "I have got them away from the enemy for this year," said Alexander; "and this I hold to be one of the best services that has been rendered for many a long day to your Majesty."³

¹ Parma to Philip, 30 Oct. 1586. MS. last cited.

² Meteren, xiii. 236.

³ Parma to Philip, MS. last cited.

According to Meteren (*ubi sup.*) this mysterious dispersion of the German troops was owing to the intrigues of Leicester's English advisers, who were unwilling that he should send the money of the States anywhere but to England, and who therefore by their machinations contrived to spirit away this auxiliary force just at the moment when by its junction with his own army the Earl was about to have Farnese in his power. "From this time forth," says Meteren, "it was obvious that Leicester was governed entirely by English counsels," and so on. It has just been shown by the Duke's private letters that the generally most accurate chronicler was mistaken in this instance, and that the deed was accomplished by Alexander's clever management alone. Some of the German princes in whose territories these levies had been made, were honourably indignant at the treachery which had been thus practised on the States. Some of the officers were punished with imprisonment, degrada-

tion, and loss of nobility and armorial bearings, and the money paid as their "waart geld" was sent back to Holland. (Le Petit, 'Grand Chronique,' II. 536.)

Reyd is still more severe. He maintains that Leicester withheld the pay which the States had furnished for these important levies, whose arrival at the time agreed upon would have changed the fortune of the war; and that he secretly prevented their coming, from a fear that they would adhere too closely to Hohenlo and Count William Lewis. Count Ysselstein, who had been sent by the Earl to deal with these mercenaries and to promise their money, was furious at the treachery of which he conceived Leicester guilty, and did not scruple to say in large companies: "Leicester has done two great things in his life. He has made my old page, Martin Schenk a knight, and myself a liar." (Reyd, 'Nederl. Gesch.' v. 85.)

The suspicion, as we have seen, was quite groundless, and Ysselstein and the historian (who was private secretary to Count William Lewis) very much mistaken.

During the period which intervened between the action at Warnsfeld and the death of Sidney, the siege-operations before Zutphen had been continued. The city, strongly garrisoned and well supplied with provisions, as it had been by Parma's care, remained impregnable ; but the sconces beyond the river and upon the island fell into Leicester's hands.¹ The great fortress which commanded the Veluwe, and which was strong enough to have resisted Count Hohenlo on a former occasion for nearly a whole year, was the scene of much hard fighting. It was gained at last by the signal valour of Edward Stanley, lieutenant to Sir William. That officer, at the commencement of an assault upon a not very practicable breach, sprang at the long pike of a Spanish soldier, who was endeavoring to thrust him from the wall, and seized it with both hands. The Spaniard struggled to maintain his hold of the weapon, Stanley to wrest it from his grasp. A dozen other soldiers broke their pikes upon his cuirass or shot at him with their muskets. Conspicuous by his dress, being all in yellow but his corslet, he was in full sight of Leicester and of five thousand men. The earth was so shifty and sandy that the soldiers who were to follow him were not able to climb the wall. Still Stanley grasped his adversary's pike, but, suddenly changing his plan, he allowed the Spaniard to lift him from the ground. Then, assisting himself with his feet against the wall, he, much to the astonishment of the spectators, scrambled quite over the parapet, and dashed sword in hand among the defenders of the fort. Had he been endowed with a hundred lives it seemed impossible for him to escape death. But his followers, stimulated by his example, made ladders for themselves of each others' shoulders, clambered at last with great exertion over the broken wall, overpowered the garrison, and made themselves masters of the sconce. Leicester, transported with enthusiasm for this noble deed of daring, knighted Edward Stanley upon the spot, besides presenting him next day with forty pounds in gold and an annuity of one hundred

¹ Strada, II. 453, 454. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 188. Bor, II. 752. Wagenaar, viii. 136.

marks sterling for life. "Since I was born, I did never see any man behave himself as he did," said the Earl. "I shall never forget it, if I live a thousand year, and he shall have a part of my living for it as long as I live."¹

The occupation of these forts terminated the military operations of the year, for the rainy season, precursor of the winter, had now set in. Leicester, leaving Sir William Stanley, with twelve hundred English and Irish horse, in command of Deventer; Sir John Burrowes, with one thousand men, in Doesburg; and Sir Robert Yorke, with one thousand more, in the great sconce before Zutphen; took his departure for the Hague.² Zutphen seemed so surrounded as to authorize the governor to expect ere long its capitulation. Nevertheless, the results of the campaign had not been encouraging. The States had lost ground, having been driven from the Meuse and Rhine, while they had with difficulty maintained themselves on the Flemish coast and upon the Yssel.

It is now necessary to glance at the internal politics of the Republic during the period of Leicester's administration and to explain the position in which he found himself at the close of the year.

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 428. | who says that Leicester presented
Compare Strada, II. 455, 456. Hooff, | Stanley with a life-rent of six hundred
Vervolgh, 188. Meteren, xiii. 237, | florins (£60). ² Bor, II. 753.

CHAPTER X.

Should Elizabeth accept the Sovereignty?—The Effects of her Anger—Quarrels between the Earl and the States—The Earl's three Counsellors—Leicester's Finance-Chamber—Discontent of the Mercantile Classes—Paul Buys and the Opposition—Keen Insight of Paul Buys—Truchsees becomes a Spy upon him—Intrigues of Buys with Denmark—His Imprisonment—The Earl's Unpopularity—His Quarrels with the States—And with the Norrises—His Counsellors Wilkes and Clerke—Letter from the Queen to Leicester—A Supper Party at Hohenlo's—A drunken Quarrel—Hohenlo's Assault upon Edward Norris—Ill Effects of the Riot.

THE brief period of sunshine had been swiftly followed by storms. The Governor Absolute had, from the outset, been placed in a false position. Before he came to the Netherlands the Queen had refused the sovereignty. Perhaps it was wise in her to decline so magnificent an offer; yet certainly her acceptance would have been perfectly honourable. The constituted authorities of the Provinces formally made the proposition. There is no doubt whatever that the whole population ardently desired to become her subjects. So far as the Netherlands were concerned, then, she would have been fully justified in extending her sceptre over a free people, who, under no compulsion and without any diplomatic chicane, had selected her for their hereditary chief. So far as regarded England, the annexation to that country of a continental cluster of states, inhabited by a race closely allied to it by blood, religion, and the instinct for political freedom, seemed, on the whole, desirable.

In a financial point of view, England would certainly lose nothing by the union. The resources of the Provinces were at least equal to her own. We have seen the astonishment which the wealth and strength of the Netherlands excited in their English visitors. They were amazed by the evidences of commercial and manufacturing prosperity, by the spectacle of luxury and advanced culture, which met them on every

side. Had the Queen—as it had been generally supposed—desired to learn whether the Provinces were able and willing to pay the expenses of their own defence before she should definitely decide on their offer of sovereignty, she was soon thoroughly enlightened upon the subject.¹ Her confidential agents all held one language. If she would only accept the sovereignty, the amount which the Provinces would pay was in a manner boundless. She was assured that the revenue of her own hereditary realm was much inferior to that of the possessions thus offered to her sway.²

In regard to constitutional polity, the condition of the Netherlands was at least as satisfactory as that of England. The great amount of civil freedom enjoyed by those countries—although perhaps an objection in the eyes of Elizabeth Tudor—should certainly have been a recommendation to her liberty-loving subjects. The question of defence had been satisfactorily answered. The Provinces, if an integral part of the English empire, could protect themselves, and would become an additional element of strength, not a troublesome encumbrance.

The difference of language was far less than that which already existed between the English and their Irish fellow-subjects, while it was counterbalanced by sympathy, instead

¹ Hoofd, xxiii. 1039, 1042. Wagenaar, viii. 102, 104; 141, 142.

² "Neither do I easily see," wrote Richard Cavendish, "how the cause may be remedied, unless it may please her most excellent Majesty to take that upon her which the whole people (and specially they of the wiser sort) both crave and cry for, namely, the sovereignty. . . . There is no doubt but the revenues will suffice to the driving of the enemy out of these countries for ever, and afterward in clear profit unto her Majesty far surmount the receipts at home." Cavendish to Burghley, 9 April, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

"The people," said Leicester, "still pray God that her Majesty will be their sovereign. She would then see

what a contribution they will all bring forth." Leicester to Burghley, 18 June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

"I may safely say to your Majesty," said he at about the same period, "that if your aid had been in such apparent sort to the countries that they might assure themselves of any certain time of continuance of the same, and that you had taken their cause indeed to heart, I am verily persuaded that they would have given very good testimonies by their very large contributions to maintain their wars for such certain number of years to be set down as your Majesty should appoint, and no prince nor practice of any person living able to draw them from you." Leicester to the Queen, 27 June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

of being aggravated by mutual hostility in the matter of religion.

With regard to the great question of abstract sovereignty, it was certainly impolitic for an absolute monarch to recognize the right of a nation to repudiate its natural allegiance. But Elizabeth had already countenanced that step by assisting the rebellion against Philip. To allow the rebels to transfer their obedience from the King of Spain to herself was only another step in the same direction. The Queen, should she annex the Provinces, would certainly be accused by the world of ambition ; but the ambition was a noble one, if, by thus consenting to the urgent solicitations of a free people, she extended the region of civil and religious liberty, and raised up a permanent bulwark against sacerdotal and royal absolutism.

A war between herself and Spain was inevitable if she accepted the sovereignty, but peace had been already rendered impossible by the treaty of alliance. It is true that the Queen imagined the possibility of combining her engagements towards the States with a conciliatory attitude towards their ancient master, but it was here that she committed the gravest error. The negotiations of Parma and his sovereign with the English court were a masterpiece of deceit on the part of Spain. We have shown, by the secret correspondence, and we shall in the sequel make it still clearer, that Philip only intended to amuse his antagonists ; that he had already prepared his plan for the conquest of England, down to the minutest details ; that the idea of tolerating religious liberty had never entered his mind ; and that his fixed purpose was not only thoroughly to chastise the Dutch rebels, but to deprive the heretic Queen who had fostered their rebellion both of throne and life. So far as regarded the Spanish King, then, the quarrel between him and Elizabeth was already mortal ; while, in a religious, moral, political, and financial point of view, it would be difficult to show that it was wrong or imprudent for England to accept the sovereignty over his ancient subjects. The cause of human freedom

seemed likely to gain by the step, for the States did not consider themselves strong enough to maintain the independent republic which had already risen.

It might be a question whether, on the whole, Elizabeth made a mistake in declining the sovereignty. She was certainly wrong, however, in wishing the lieutenant-general of her six thousand auxiliary troops to be clothed, as such, with viceregal powers. The States-General, in a moment of enthusiasm, appointed him governor absolute, and placed in his hands, not only the command of the forces, but the entire control of their revenues, imposts, and customs, together with the appointment of civil and military officers. Such an amount of power could only be delegated by the sovereign. Elizabeth had refused the sovereignty: it then rested with the States. They only, therefore, were competent to confer the power which Elizabeth wished her favourite to exercise simply as her lieutenant-general.

Her wrathful and vituperative language damaged her cause and that of the Netherlands more severely than can now be accurately estimated. The Earl was placed at once in a false, a humiliating, almost a ridiculous position. The authority which the States had thus a second time offered to England was a second time and most scornfully thrust back upon them. Elizabeth was indignant that "her own man" should clothe himself in the supreme attributes which she had refused. The States were forced by the violence of the Queen to take the authority into their own hands again, and Leicester was looked upon as a disgraced man.

Then came the neglect with which the Earl was treated by her Majesty and her ill-timed parsimony towards the cause. No letters to him in four months, no remittances for the English troops, not a penny of salary for him. The whole expense of the war was thrown for the time upon their hands, and the English soldiers seemed only a few thousand starving, naked, dying vagrants, an incumbrance instead of an aid.¹

¹ "I find the most part of the bands | tember," said Quartermaster Digges, that came over in August and Sep- | "more than half wasted, dead and

The States, in their turn, drew the purse-strings. The two hundred thousand florins monthly were paid. The four hundred thousand florins which had been voted as an additional supply were for a time held back, as Leicester expressly stated, because of the discredit which had been thrown upon him from home.¹

The military operations were crippled for want of funds, but more fatal than everything else were the secret negotiations for peace. Subordinate individuals, like Graßigni and De Loo, went up and down, bringing presents out of England for Alexander Farnese,² and bragging that Parma and themselves could have peace whenever they liked to make it, and affirming that Leicester's opinions were of no account whatever. Elizabeth's coldness to the Earl and to the Netherlands was affirmed to be the Prince of Parma's sheet-anchor; while meantime a house was ostentatiously³ prepared in

gone, and many of the remainder sick, lame, and shrewdly enfeebled, fitter to be relieved at home in hospitals than to take her Majesty's pay here for soldiers. Our soldiers, notwithstanding *great numbers of them be paid with earth in their graves*, yet the rest are so ill contented of their due for the time past, that, if pay come not speedily, before they are drawn to deal with the enemy, I doubt some worse adventure than I will divine beforehand." 'Advertisement of the present state of these Low Countries, by T. Digges,' ²/₁₃ March, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

¹ Strangely enough, Elizabeth was under the impression that the *extra* grant of 400,000 *florins* (40,000*l.*) for four months was four hundred thousand *pounds sterling*! "The rest that was granted by the States, as extraordinary to levy an army, which was 400,000 florins, not pounds, as I hear your Majesty taketh it. It is forty thousand pounds, and to be paid in March, April, May, and June last," &c. Leicester to the Queen, 11 Oct. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

She had certainly formed already an exalted idea of the capacity of the

Provinces to protect themselves. She had in a year paid but seventy thousand pounds herself, and believed the States able, *over and above their regular* contributions, to furnish an extraordinary supply of one hundred thousand pounds a month.

² Leicester to the Queen, 6 June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ "Amongst all the enemy's means to persuade his discontented and ill-fed companions," said Cavendish, "this seemeth to be his sheet-anchor, namely, that where the only comfort of this people dependeth wholly upon her Maj.'s most gracious relief and support, now is the disposition thereof in her so cooled, as she very faintly stretcheth forth her hand thereunto, which evidently appears, as well by the many disgraces which here my Lord hath received from her Maj., to the great blemish of his authority, as also by the slack payment of her troops. and so long as my Lord shall be unable to front him in the field, so long will this people be without hope, and the enemy inflamed with assured hope of victory." Cavendish to Burghley, 15 June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

Brussels by their direction for the reception of an English ambassador, who was every moment expected to arrive.¹ Under such circumstances it was in vain for the governor-general to protest that the accounts of secret negotiations were false, and quite natural that the States should lose their confidence in the Queen. An unfriendly and suspicious attitude towards her representative was a necessary result, and the demonstrations against the common enemy became still more languid. But for these underhand dealings, Grave, Venlo, and Neusz, might have been saved,² and the current of the Meuse and Rhine have remained in the hands of the patriots.

The Earl was industrious, generous, and desirous of playing well his part. His personal courage was undoubted, and, in the opinion of his admirers—themselves, some of them, men of large military experience—his ability as a commander was of a high order.³ The valour displayed by the English nobles and gentlemen who accompanied him was magnificent, worthy the descendants of the victors at Crecy, Poitiers, and Agincourt; and the good behaviour of their followers—with a few rare exceptions—had been equally signal. But now the army was dwindling to a ghastly array of scarecrows, and the recruits, as they came from England, were appalled by the spectacle presented by their predecessors.⁴ “Our old ragged rogues here have so discouraged our new men,” said Leicester; “as I protest to you they look like dead men.”⁵ Out of eleven hundred freshly-arrived Englishmen, five hun-

¹ “It is certainly known that the enemy hath not a little prevailed with that stratagem, causing to be published that there was a treaty of peace between her Majesty and him, and that the same should be shortly concluded; and to make this device to carry the more shew of truth, he caused a house to be prepared in Brussels, saying that it was for an ambassador coming out of England to conclude the peace, by which means he hath contained divers towns in terms of obedience that were ready to

revolt, in respect of their misery, poverty, and famine.” Wilkes to Burghley, 7 Aug. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Leicester to the Queen, 20 June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ North to Burghley, 23 May, 1586. Same to same, 29 May, 1586. Heneage to Walsingham, 25 May, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Leicester to Burghley, 18 June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.) Bruce's ‘Leyc. Corresp.’ 338.

⁵ Bruce's ‘Leyc. Corresp.’ 338.

dred ran away in two days.¹ Some were caught and hanged, and all seemed to prefer hanging to remaining in the service, while the Earl declared that he would be hanged as well rather than again undertake such a charge without being assured payment for his troops beforehand.²

The valour of Sidney and Essex, Willoughby and Pelham, Roger Williams and Martin Schenk, was set at nought by such untoward circumstances. Had not Philip also left his army to starve and Alexander Farnese to work miracles, it would have fared still worse with Holland and England, and with the cause of civil and religious liberty in the year 1586.

The States having resumed, as much as possible, their former authority, were on very unsatisfactory terms with the governor-general. Before long, it was impossible for the twenty or thirty individuals called the States to be in the same town with the man whom, at the commencement of the year, they had greeted so warmly.³ The hatred between the Leicester faction and the municipalities became intense, for the foundation of the two great parties which were long to divide the Netherland commonwealth was already laid. The mercantile patrician interest, embodied in the states of Holland and Zeeland, and inclined to a large toleration in the matter of religion, which afterwards took the form of Arminianism, was opposed by a strict Calvinist party, which desired to subject the political commonwealth to the reformed church; which nevertheless indulged in very democratic views of the social compact; and which was controlled by a few refugees from Flanders and Brabant, who had succeeded in obtaining the confidence of Leicester.

Thus the Earl was the nominal head of the Calvinist democratic party; while young Maurice of Nassau, stadholder of Holland and Zeeland, and guided by Barneveld, Buys, and other leading statesmen of these Provinces, was in an attitude pre-

¹ Leicester to Burghley, MS. last cited. Bruce, *ubi sup.*

² *Ibid.*

³ Doyley to Burghley, 8 Aug. 1586.

(S. P. Office MS.) Compare Wagenaar viii. 142, 143.

cisely the reverse of the one which he was destined at a later and equally memorable epoch to assume. The chiefs of the faction which had now succeeded in gaining the confidence of Leicester were Reingault, Burgrave, and Deventer, all refugees.

The laws of Holland and of the other United States were very strict on the subject of citizenship, and no one but a native was competent to hold office in each Province. Doubtless, such regulations were narrow-spirited; but to fly in the face of them was the act of a despot, and this is what Leicester did. Reingault was a Fleming. He was a bankrupt merchant, who had been taken into the protection of Lamoral Egmont, and by that nobleman recommended to Granvelle for an office under the Cardinal's government. The refusal of this favour was one of the original causes of Egmont's hostility to Granvelle. Reingault subsequently entered the service of the Cardinal, however, and rewarded the kindness of his former benefactor by great exertions in finding, or inventing, evidence to justify the execution of that unfortunate nobleman. He was afterwards much employed by the Duke of Alva and by the Grand Commander Requesens; but after the pacification of Ghent he had been completely thrown out of service. He had recently, in a subordinate capacity, accompanied the legations of the States to France and to England, and had now contrived to ingratiate himself with the Earl of Leicester. He affected great zeal for the Calvinistic religion—an exhibition which, in the old servant of Granvelle and Alva, was far from edifying—and would employ no man or maid-servant in his household until their religious principles had been thoroughly examined by one or two clergymen. In brief, he was one of those, who, according to a homely Flemish proverb, are wont to hang their piety on the bell-rope; but, with the exception of this brief interlude in his career, he lived and died a Papist.¹

¹ Hoofd, Vervolgh, 142, 143. Reyndani, V. 89, 90.

Gerard Proninck, called Deventer, was a respectable inhabitant of Bois-le-Duc, who had left that city after it had again become subject to the authority of Spain. He was of decent life and conversation, but a restless and ambitious demagogue. As a Brabantine, he was unfit for office; and yet, through Leicester's influence and the intrigues of the democratic party, he obtained the appointment of burgo-master in the city of Utrecht. The States-General, however, always refused to allow him to appear at their sessions as representative of that city.¹

Daniel de Burgrave was a Flemish mechanic, who, by the exertion of much energy and talent, had risen to the post of procureur-general of Flanders. After the conquest of the principal portion of that Province by Parma, he had made himself useful to the English governor-general in various ways, and particularly as a linguist. He spoke English—a tongue with which few Netherlanders of that day were familiar—and as the Earl knew no other, except (very imperfectly) Italian, he found his services in speaking and writing a variety of languages very convenient. He was the governor's private secretary, and, of course, had no entrance to the council of state, but he was accused of frequently thrusting himself into their hall of sessions, where, under pretence of arranging the Earl's table, or portfolio, or papers, he was much addicted to whispering into his master's ear, listening to conversation,—to eaves-dropping, in short, and general intrusiveness.²

"A most faithful, honest servant is Burgrave," said Leicester; "a substantial, wise man."³ 'Tis as sufficient a man as ever I met withal of any nation; very well learned, exceeding wise, and sincere in religion. I cannot commend the man too much. He is the only comfort I have had of any of this nation."⁴

These three personages were the leaders of the Leicester

¹ Hoofd, Vervolgh, &c., just cited.

² Hoofd, Reyd., *ubi sup.*

³ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 363, 422.

⁴ Leicester to Walsingham, 27 July, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

faction. They had much influence with all the refugees from Flanders, Brabant, and the Walloon Provinces. In Utrecht, especially, where the Earl mainly resided, their intrigues were very successful. Deventer was appointed, as already stated, to the important post of burgomaster; many of the influential citizens were banished, without cause or trial; the upper branch of the municipal government, consisting of the clerical delegates of the colleges, was in an arbitrary manner abolished; and finally, the absolute sovereignty of the Province, without condition, was offered to the Queen of England.¹

Leicester was now determined to carry out one of the great objects which the Queen had in view when she sent him to the Netherlands. She desired thoroughly to ascertain the financial resources of the Provinces, and their capacity to defend themselves.² It was supposed by the States, and hoped by the Earl and by a majority of the Netherland people, that she would, in case the results were satisfactory, accept, after all, the sovereignty. She certainly was not to be blamed that she wished to make this most important investigation, but it was her own fault that any new machinery had been rendered necessary. The whole control of the finances had, in the beginning of the year, been placed in the Earl's hands,³ and it was only by her violently depriving him of his credit and of the confidence of the country that he had not retained it. He now established a finance-chamber, under the chief control of Reingault, who promised him mountains of money, and who was to be chief treasurer.⁴ Paul

¹ Bor, II. 722.

² Hoofd, 1039, 1042. Wagenaar, viii. 142.

³ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 1586; "And," said he to the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London, "you may all sleep quietly in England, so long as these countries may be held in their earnest good-will."

⁴ Bor, II. 722.

Leicester to Burghley, 28 June, 1586. Cavendish to same, 19 June, 1586.

Leicester to the Queen, 26 June, 1586. Same to same, 27 June, 1586. Wilkes to Lords of Council, 20 Aug. 1586. (S. P. Office MSS.)

"The Prince of Orange," said Cavendish (MS. *ubi sup.*), "being not ignorant of the frauds of the States, often levelled at this matter (a finance-council), but was never able to hit it, because they knew he was poor, and had no way else to live but upon their alms-basket. . . . Amongst other

Buys was appointed by Leicester to fill a subordinate position in the new council. He spurned the offer with great indignation, saying that Reingault was not fit to be his clerk, and that he was not likely himself, therefore, to accept a humble post under the administration of such an individual. This scornful refusal filled to the full the hatred of Leicester against the ex-Advocate of Holland.¹

The mercantile interest at once took the alarm, because it was supposed that the finance-chamber was intended to crush the merchants. Early in April an Act had been passed by the state-council, prohibiting commerce with the Spanish possessions. The embargo was intended to injure the obedient Provinces and their sovereign, but it was shown that its effect would be to blast the commerce of Holland. It forbade the exportation from the republic not only of all provisions and munitions of war, but of all goods and merchandize whatever, to Spain, Portugal, the Spanish Netherlands, or any other of Philip's territories, either in Dutch or neutral vessels.² It would certainly seem, at first sight, that such an

things, there is one impost granted by favour to some parties for 100*l.* by the year, which is indeed worth 8,000*l.* With these tricks have they enriched themselves, all which devices must now quail." If such stories, which were daily whispered into Leicester's ears, had a shadow of foundation, it was not surprising that he should expect to increase the revenue by a more judicious farming. But he never found his "mountains of gold," nor any collector who could turn a hundred pounds into eight thousand. "I have," said Leicester (Letters to the Queen, *ubi sup.*), "established, against the wills of some here, a chamber of finance, by which I shall be sure to be privy to the levying and bestowing of all their revenues—a matter your Majesty hath often sought to understand thereof. But, with all the wit and means I could use, could never certainly bring it to pass, nor never will, but by this only way. I trust shortly to have very assured knowledge to satisfy your Majesty of the States' ability, which thing I have

gone about from the beginning. I hope, within twenty days, to give your Majesty some near reckoning of all their revenues every way. Your Majesty doth suppose I deal weakly with these men, but I would you knew how I have dealt with them of late, to bring the office of finance to pass. I had a good will to have dealt long since roundly with them, I confess, but my case was too well known to them. But as soon as my heartening came from mine old supporter, I was found a more shrew than your Majesty will believe; for mine old patience hath been too much tried since I came from my quiet home to this wayward generation."

"I find that until the time of my coming hither," said Wilkes (Letter to Council, *ubi sup.*), "the States have been contented to disguise and conceal the truth of many particularities, which now they profess to discover, meaning, as they say, to *anatomise unto her Majesty* the whole state of their strength."

¹ Bor, II. 722.

² Bor, II. 703, *seq.* who is, however,

act was reasonable, although the result would really be, not to deprive the enemy of supplies, but to throw the whole Baltic trade into the hands of the Bremen, Hamburg, and "Osterling" merchants. Leicester expected to derive a considerable revenue by granting passports and licenses to such neutral traders, but the edict became so unpopular that it was never thoroughly enforced, and was before long rescinded.¹

The odium of the measure was thrown upon the governor-general, yet he had in truth opposed it in the state-council, and was influential in procuring its repeal.²

Another important Act had been directed against the mercantile interest, and excited much general discontent. The Netherlands wished the staple of the English cloth manufacture to be removed from Emden—the petty sovereign of which place was the humble servant of Spain—to Amsterdam or Delft. The desire was certainly natural, and the Dutch merchants sent a committee to confer with Leicester. He was much impressed with their views, and with the sagacity of their chairman, one Mylward, "a wise fellow and well languaged, an ancient man and very religious," as the Earl pronounced him to be.³

Notwithstanding the wisdom of this well-languaged fellow, however, the Queen, for some strange reason, could not be

mistaken in ascribing the measure to the inspiration of Leicester.

¹ Bor, II., 703, *seq.* Wagenaar, viii. 147, *seq.* who is in this matter even more unjust to the Earl than contemporary authorities.

² Leicester to the Queen, 11 Oct. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

"I have very good testimony of all the council here," said the Earl, "that I only in council stood against the placard, inasmuch it lay a month by, for indeed I thought it unreasonable and that it would give all princes just cause of offence toward this country, and, by all duty to your Majesty, I did refuse to let it pass. At length, both States and council renewed the matter again to me, and showed me

presently how the like had been done, and what profit it would bring, pressing me to give it some consideration in council to be debated. It went so through them all as there was not a man spake against it, yet my resolution being to be had, I would give no consent till I had advertised your Majesty thereof, which they all liked well. And after it was agreed and published, it was again by my means revoked and qualified, as doth appear by record."

Compare Meteren, xiii. 234^v. Wagenaar, *ubi sup.* Bor, *ubi sup.* who seems to be mistaken on this point.

The real author of the edict was Reingault. (Meteren, *ubi sup.*)

³ Leicester to Burghley, 29 July, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

induced to change the staple from Emden, although it was shown that the public revenue of the Netherlands would gain twenty thousand pounds a year by the measure. "All Holland will cry out for it," said Leicester; "but I had rather they cried than that England should weep."¹

Thus the mercantile community, and especially the patrician families of Holland and Zeeland, all engaged in trade, became more and more hostile to the governor-general and to his financial trio, who were soon almost as unpopular as the famous Consulta of Cardinal Granvelle had been. It was the custom of the States to consider the men who surrounded the Earl as needy and unprincipled renegades and adventurers. It was the policy of his advisers to represent the merchants and the States—which mainly consisted of, or were controlled by merchants—as a body of corrupt, selfish, greedy money-getters.²

¹ Leicester to Burghley, 10 Aug. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² "The wonderful cunning dealing of those fellows here called the States concerning the finances and the receipt of revenue, whereupon the people rest greatly grieved, and themselves, as is thought, no less enriched." Cavendish to Burghley, 9 April, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

"The States be sly persons," said Lord North, "inconstant and treacherous, the most of them Papists (!), and so rich as they will do any turn to serve themselves. If they again find that her Majesty likes not of my Lord's authority, they will doubt of their own safety, practise their own peace, and leave my Lord and all his to the spirit of the enemy. North to Burghley, 23 May, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

"These be dainty and dangerous people to deal withal," said Leicester, "specially when they shall be desperate of their hope, and disappointed of their help. I must say truly to your Majesty I do find some of the best sort as honest and as thankful as ever I knew men, and some others as perverse and as ingrate as might well be spared out of all good company.

There are also men who are able, and do most hurt. . . . These men begin utterly to despair of your Majesty's good assistance, and an apt time is offered now for the lewd and bad disposed persons to work their feat." Leicester to the Queen, 6 June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

"The whole people," said Cavendish, "are here so addicted to her Majesty, and in respect of her to my Lord, in whom they find such incessant travail and care for her service and their general good, and in respect of whom they would willingly cashier or rather hang all those called States. Your Lordship may think I write vehemently, but I know I write truly." Cavendish to Burghley, 19 June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

"It will be a harder matter," said Leicester again, "than you can imagine, to bring this State in that tune it was three months past. It will require a whole and full countenance from her Majesty and with all speed possible, if you will have it kept from the enemy. And beware these fellows do not prevent her Majesty. If they do, you can consider how harmful it is like to prove, and *though they be counted dullards and drunkards, they*

The calumnies put in circulation against the States by Reingault and his associates grew at last so outrageous, and the prejudice created in the mind of Leicester and his immediate English adherents so intense, that it was rendered necessary for the States of Holland and Zeeland to write to their agent Ortell in London, that he might forestall the effect of these perpetual misrepresentations on her Majesty's government.¹ Leicester, on the other hand, under the

have shrewd and subtle heads as ever I found anywhere. . . . The best man in England were not too good, as matters stand, to be employed hither, either to encourage them thoroughly, or to understand their estate more deeply." Leicester to Burghley, 20 July, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

"I did never see such heady people as these States are," said the Earl, once more, "I cannot blame the common sort to dislike them, for there is no reasoning against their resolutions. . . . There must be very wise and good handling had in these causes. There is no more such people to deal withal again. I mean these that be rich and politic fellows. They hunt after their own wealth and surety, and without an assurance of a strange assistance they will be suddenly gone, and it is high time to look into the course her Majesty will take hereafter." Same to same, 29 July, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

"They have given to my Lord of Leicester," said Wilkes, "a government with the word *absolute*, but with so many restrictions that his authority is limited almost to nothing, and he is in truth for the politic government but their servant; having reserved to themselves, besides the sovereignty, the disposing of all the contributions (saving the monthly allowance), the church goods, confiscations, choice of officers . . . and to keep themselves from rendering account of anything, they do impugn his court of finances now erected, alleging that he hath not authority to erect any such court, or to establish offices without their license." Wilkes to Lords of Council, 20 Aug. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

"The exactions and excises are in-

credible that are laid on this people," said Digges, "and such as in all probability do amount to three times as much (!) as the 200,000 florins monthly which they allow his Excellency to prosecute the war. The rest they divide among themselves . . . giving great stipends to Count Hollock, Count Maurice, Count Meurs, Count William, and many colonels. But, for all this, the States offer that there shall be new impositions to levy more." T. Digges's 'Advertisement of present state of the Low Countries,'³ March, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

¹ "You have doubtless understood," said the States, "of the erection of the finance-council for the better husbanding of the money furnished by these countries, of the which Jacques Ringault is ordained treasurer. . . . Stephen Perret (a seditious person, often imprisoned, and a fraudulent bankrupt), being come out of Antwerp after the yielding up of the same, hath kept correspondence with Ringault, whilst he was in England. Very shortly after the coming of his Excellency into these countries, he hath sought by all possible means to bring him in suspicion and jealousy by the Estates of the country, and propounded manifold novelties unto his Excellency whereby to levy money, and in the propounding thereof shamefully slandered the Estates with injurious, seditious, and untrue reports and drifts. After Ringault's arrival here, he hath found means to get in better credit by his Excellency, and, laying their heads together, and either being set awork by the enemy or else thinking to enrich themselves out of the calamity and misery of these countries, have

inspiration of his artful advisers, was vehement in his entreaties that Ortell should be sent away from England.¹

The ablest and busiest of the opposition-party, the "nimblest head"² in the States-General was the ex-Advocate of Holland, Paul Buys. This man was then the foremost statesman in the Netherlands. He had been the firmest friend to the English alliance; he had resigned his office when the States were offering the sovereignty to France, and had been on the point of taking service in Denmark. He had afterwards been prominent in the legation which offered the sovereignty to Elizabeth, and, for a long time, had been the most firm, earnest, and eloquent advocate of the English policy. Leicester had originally courted him, caressed him, especially recommended him to the Queen's favour, given him money—as he said, "two hundred pounds sterling thick at a time"—and

made agreement between them in April last that all that which they, by means of any new invention by them already propounded or yet to be propounded unto his Excellency, should get or enjoy, *that the same should be divided between them.* And after that he sought of his Excellency the 20th penny of all that which should proceed of his pretended inventions. To which end Ringault, with his own hand, has drawn an octroi, or warrant, and got his Excellency to sign the same, without knowledge of the council, or any of the secretaries, namely, that he should have the 30th penny. They have also taken great pains to change the course of the common means, which so laudably and with such great travail his Excellency of worthy memory (William of Orange) brought in train, and so to bring it into collection, thereby to intrude themselves and such other (having no credit) to furn any of the said general means in the collection. The foresaid Perret and Ringault have also travailed by all means to set misunderstanding between his Excellency and the Estates and the council of state, and practised many unlawful devices to alter the estate of the countries, and to get his Excellency

to do all that which they imagined to serve to their intent. To which end they have used many unheard-of and indecent proceedings without order of law, and against the privileges and customs of these countries, and against the estate and welfare of the same, through a company of inconstant and base persons, for the greater part being strangers, applying unto themselves and their friends (a company of strangers) many offices and receipts, thinking to deal with the same according to their own pleasure and appetite. All which we have at large imparted to Mr. Wilkes, showed him the original pieces, and given him good instruction by writing thereof, to the end he may give her Majesty and her honourable council to understand the personage of these two spirits." States of Holland and Zeeland to Ortell, 12 Sept. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

¹ "You have there his (Paul Buys's) agent Ortell. It were well he were thence. I did send twice for him, but he excuseth himself." Leicester to Burghley, 20 July, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.) Compare 'Leyc. Corresp.' 311.

² Bart. Clerk to Burghley, 24 July. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

openly pronounced him to be "in ability above all men."¹ "No man hath ever sought a man," he said, "as I have sought P. B."²

The period of their friendship was, however, very brief. Before many weeks had passed there was no vituperative epithet that Leicester was not in the daily habit of bestowing upon Paul. The Earl's vocabulary of abuse was not a limited one, but he exhausted it on the head of the Advocate. He lacked at last words and breath to utter what was like him. He pronounced his former friend "a very dangerous man, altogether hated of the people and the States;" "a lewd sinner, nursled in revolutions;" "a most covetous, bribing fellow, caring for nothing but to bear the sway and grow rich;" "a man who had played many parts, both lewd and audacious;" "a very knave, a traitor to his country;" "the most ungrateful wretch alive, a hater of the Queen and of all the English;" "a most unthankful man to her Majesty;" "a practiser to make himself rich and great, and nobody else;" "among all villains the greatest;" "a bolsterer of all papists and ill men, a dissembler, a devil, an atheist," a "most naughty man, and a most notorious drunkard in the worst degree."

Where the Earl hated, his hatred was apt to be deadly, and he was determined, if possible, to have the life of the detested Paul. "You shall see I will do well enough with him, and that shortly," he said. "I will course him as he was not so this twenty year. I will warrant him hanged and one or two of his fellows, but you must not tell your shirt of this yet;" and when he was congratulating the government on his having at length procured the execution of Captain Hemart, the surrenderer of Grave, he added, pithily, "and you shall hear that Mr. P. B. shall follow."³

¹ Leicester to Burghley, 10 Aug. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Ibid.

³ Leicester to Burghley, 20 June, 1586. Same to same, 10 Aug 1586. Same to same, 20 July, 1586. B. Clerk to same, 24 July. (S. P. Office MSS.)

Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 130, 291, 303, 310, 311, 312, 352. Cavendish observed that "there were many false brethren in the higher form among the people, of whom he feared that Paul Buys would not prove the *puissés*." Cavendish to Burghley, 15 June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

Yet the Earl's real griefs against Buys may be easily summed up. The lewd sinner, nursed in revolutions, had detected the secret policy of the Queen's government, and was therefore perpetually denouncing the intrigues going on with Spain. He complained that her Majesty was tired of having engaged in the Netherland enterprise; he declared that she would be glad to get fairly out of it; that her reluctance to spend a farthing more in the cause than she was obliged to do was hourly increasing upon her; that she was deceiving and misleading the States-General; and that she was hankering after a peace. He said that the Earl had a secret intention to possess himself of certain towns in Holland, in which case the whole question of peace and war would be in the hands of the Queen, who would also have it thus in her power to reimburse herself at once for all expenses that she had incurred.¹

It would be difficult to show that there was anything very calumnious in these charges, which, no doubt, Paul was in the habit of making. As to the economical tendencies of her Majesty, sufficient evidence has been given already from Leicester's private letters. "Rather than spend one hundred pounds," said Walsingham, "she can be content to be deceived of five thousand."² That she had been concealing from the States, from Walsingham, from Leicester, during the whole summer, her secret negotiations with Spain, has also been made apparent. That she was disgusted with the enterprise in which she had embarked, Walsingham, Burghley, Hatton, and all the other statesmen of England, most abundantly testified. Whether Leicester had really an intention to possess himself of certain cities in Holland—a charge made by Paul Buys, and denounced as especially slanderous by the Earl—may better appear from his own private statements.

"Paul Buys—still giving out slanderous speeches—for that I only sought to . . . get their towns . . . that thereby, whencesoever her Majesty should think good to treat for peace,

. . . . I should hereby be able to compel them to what end she should think good." Leicester to Walsingham, 20 July, 1586, in Bruce, 376.

² Bruce's 'Leyce. Corresp.' 273.

*"This I will do," he wrote to the Queen, "and I hope not to fail of it, to get into my hands three or four most principal places in North Holland, which will be such a strength and assurance for your Majesty, as you shall see you shall both rule these men and make war or peace as you list, always provided—whatsoever you hear, or is—part not with the Brill; and having these places in your hands, whatsoever should chance to these countries, your Majesty, I will warrant sure enough to make what peace you will in an hour, and to have your debts and charges readily answered."*¹ At a somewhat later moment it will be seen what came of these secret designs. For the present, Leicester was very angry with Paul for daring to suspect him of such treachery.

The Earl complained, too, that the influence of Buys with Hohenlo and young Maurice of Nassau was most pernicious. Hohenlo had formerly stood high in Leicester's opinion. He was a "plain, faithful soldier, a most valiant gentleman," and he was still more important, because about to marry Mary of Nassau, eldest daughter of William the Silent, and coheirress with Philip William, to the Buren property. But he had been tampered with by the intriguing Paul Buys, and had then wished to resign his office under Leicester. Being pressed for reasons, he had "grown solemn," and withdrawn himself almost entirely.

Maurice, with his "solemn sly wit," also gave the Earl much trouble, saying little, but thinking much, and listening to the insidious Paul. He "stood much on making or marring," so Leicester thought, "as he met with good counsel." He had formerly been on intimate terms with the governor-general, who affected to call him his son; but he had subsequently kept aloof, and in three months had not come near him.² The Earl thought that money might do much, and was

¹ Leicester to the Queen, 27 June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² "The Count Maurice hath not been three months with his Lordship. He is utterly discontented, and much advised by Ste. Aldegonde, who is

assuredly the King of Spain's, and practiseth (as an instrument of sedition) to animate the Count, by all means possible, to thwart my Lord in the course of her Majesty's service. The Count, well advised by Ste. Alde-

anxious for Sir Francis Drake to come home from the Indies with millions of gold, that the Queen might make both Hohenlo and Maurice a handsome present before it should be too late.¹

Meantime he did what he could with Elector Truchsess to lure them back again. That forlorn little prelate was now poorer and more wretched than ever. He was becoming paralytic, though young, and his heart was broken through want. Leicester, always generous as the sun, gave him money, four thousand florins at a time, and was most earnest that the Queen should put him on her pension list.² "His wisdom, his behaviour, his languages, his person," said the Earl, "all would like her well. He is in great melancholy for his town of Neusz, and for his poverty, having a very noble mind. If he be lost, her Majesty had better lose a hundred thousand pounds."³

The melancholy Truchsess now became a spy and a go-between. He insinuated himself into the confidence of Paul Buys, wormed his secrets from him, and then communicated them to Hohenlo and to Leicester; "but he did it very wisely," said the Earl, "so that he was not mistrusted."⁴ The governor always affected, in order to screen the elector from suspicion, to obtain his information from persons in Utrecht; and he had indeed many spies in that city, who diligently reported Paul's table-talk. Nevertheless, that "noble gentleman, the elector," said Leicester, hath dealt most deeply with him, to seek out the bottom."⁵ As the ex-Advocate of Holland was very communicative in his cups, and very bitter against the governor-general, there was soon such a fund of information collected on the subject by various

gonde and Villiers, repineth secretly that her Majesty should have anything to do in the government of the country. It is to be feared his hidden malice will do much mischief, and many ill offices in the common cause now in hand." "Matters to be related to her Majesty by a special messenger from the Earl of Leicester," 20 June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

The opinion here expressed in regard to Sainte Aldegonde was subsequently and distinctly contradicted by Wilkes.

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 374.

² Ibid. 378.

³ Ibid. 374.

⁴ Ibid. 377.

⁵ Ibid. 377.

eaves-droppers, that Leicester was in hopes of very soon hanging Mr. Paul Buys, as we have already seen.

The burthen of the charges against the culprit was his statement that the Provinces would be gone if her Majesty did not declare herself, vigorously and generously, in their favour; but, as this was the perpetual cry of Leicester himself, there seemed hardly hanging matter in that. That noble gentleman, the elector, however, had nearly saved the hangman his trouble, having so dealt with Hohenlo as to "bring him into as good a mind as ever he was;" and the first fruits of this good mind were, that the honest Count—a man of prompt dealings—walked straight to Paul's house in order to kill him on the spot.¹ Something fortunately prevented the execution of this plan; but for a time at least the energetic Count continued to be "governed greatly" by the ex-archbishop, and "did impart wholly unto him his most secret heart."

Thus the "deep wise Truxy," as Leicester called him, continued to earn golden opinions, and followed up his conversion of Hohenlo by undertaking to "bring Maurice into tune again also," and the young Prince was soon on better terms with his "affectionate father" than he had ever been before.²

Paul Buys was not so easily put down, however, nor the two magnates so thoroughly gained over. Before the end of the season Maurice stood in his old position, the nominal head of the Holland or patrician party, chief of the opposition to Leicester, while Hohenlo had become more bitter than ever against the Earl. The quarrel between himself and Edward Norris, to which allusion will soon be made, tended to increase the dissatisfaction, although he singularly misunderstood Leicester's sentiments throughout the whole affair. Hohenlo recovered of his wound before Zutphen; but, on his recovery, was more malcontent than ever.³ The Earl was obliged at last to confess that "he was a very dangerous man, inconstant, envious, and hateful to all our nation, and a very

¹ Ibid. 376.

² Bruce's 'Leyd. Corresp.' 372.

³ Ibid. 378.

traitor to the cause. There is no dealing to win him," he added, "I have sought it to my cost. His best friends tell me he is not to be trusted."¹

Meantime that lewd sinner, the indefatigable Paul, was plotting desperately—so Leicester said and believed—to transfer the sovereignty of the Provinces to the King of Denmark. Buys, who was privately of opinion that the States required an absolute head, "though it were but an onion's head,"² and that they would thankfully continue under Leicester as governor absolute if Elizabeth would accept the sovereignty, had made up his mind that the Queen would never take that step. He was therefore disposed to offer the crown to the King of Denmark, and was believed to have brought Maurice—who was to espouse that King's daughter³—to the same way of thinking. Young Count Rantzau, son of a distinguished Danish statesman, made a visit to the Netherlands in order to confer with Buys. Paul was also anxious to be appointed envoy to Denmark, ostensibly to arrange for the two thousand cavalry, which the King had long before promised for the assistance of the Provinces, but in reality, to examine the details of this new project; and Leicester represented to the Queen very earnestly how powerful the Danish monarch would become, thus rendered master of the narrow seas, and how formidable to England.⁴

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 446.

Wilkes had also formed an unfavourable opinion of the Count. "I do not find that the States or people," he said, "have any great affection for him. The man is doubtless valiant, but rash, bloody, unfortunate, and subject to many imperfections. They would willingly be rid of him, if they might without danger." Wilkes to the Lords of Council, 20 Aug. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Notes by Paul Buys, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Ibid.

⁴ "Paul Buys . . . perceiving of late," said Leicester, "that your Maj. meaneth not to proceed so far in these countries as he looked for, or rather not finding himself the absolute direc-

tor and governor as he would be, is secretly working to make a king indeed over those two countries, Holland and Zeeland, and one he doth insinuate unto men's minds already all that ever he can, is the King of Denmark—a matter not unlike to come to pass, if your Maj. shall not assure these people of the continuance of your favour, which, if they should be, all the princes of the world cannot win them from you. But this lewd sinner loseth no time, where he can be heard, to inform men how fickle a trust there is to be had of your Majesty's favour or promise, repenting withal greatly that he ever procured me over, being indeed, as he says, since fallen out in no better grace with you. . . . If the King should have these two provinces

In the midst of these plottings, real or supposed, a party of armed men, one fine summer's morning, suddenly entered Paul's bedroom as he lay asleep at the house of the burgo-master, seized his papers, and threw him into prison in the wine-cellar of the town-house. "Oh my papers, oh my papers!" cried the unfortunate politician, according to Leicester's statement, "the Queen of England will for ever hate me." The Earl disavowed all participation in the arrest; but he was not believed. He declared himself not sorry that the measure had been taken, and promised that he would not "be hasty to release him," not doubting that "he would be found faulty enough." Leicester maintained that there was stuff enough discovered to cost Paul his head; but he never lost his head, nor was anything treasonable or criminal ever found against him. The intrigue with Denmark—never proved—and commenced, if undertaken at all, in utter despair of Elizabeth's accepting the sovereignty, was the gravest charge. He re-

absolutely as king. you must assure yourself he will be lord and commander over the narrow seas, and all your traffics, east and northward, wholly under his restraint, for *he will be the only mighty prince by sea*. . . . I refused P. B. to go to the King as ambassador, being marvellous earnest therein . . . but I trust to come to further knowledge of this matter, and to prevent Master Buys well enough. P. B. hath flatly said to me, of late, that the King of Denmark were the fittest lord for them in Christendom, *next your Majesty*." Leicester to the Queen, 20 June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

"It is feared," said Cox, specially deputed by Leicester to report this matter to the Queen's government, "that the King of Denmark is alienated, and would be glad to have the sovereignty of these countries himself. Paul Buys hath not spared of late to intend such a practice, and participating the same with Count Maurice, alleging plainly to his Lordship, that it is commonly spoken and received as current money, that her Majesty will abandon that cause and people at Michaelmas, and this being so, that it were fit for them to think of some

other prince, who might protect and defend them, before they should fall into further misery. He was of opinion that the King of Denmark would most gladly entertain the action. He was strong in shipping, and best able, in that respect, to defend the best part of their countries, which was Holland and Zeeland. His speeches were often intermingled with many coloured protestations, how much he desired that her Maj. would continue their gracious lady in the cause, as the fittest princess to yield them comfort in their calamities, yet hath his Lordship been certainly informed that he practiseth with all earnestness to bring this matter to pass for the King of Denmark, and hath greatly desired that he may be the man to go into Denmark to solicit for the 2000 horses promised, for the end he may better disguise his purpose under this colour," &c. 'Matters to be related to her Majesty,' 20 June, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

Robert Sidney was subsequently sent to Denmark by Leicester to look into this matter. Wilkes to Lords of Council, 20 Aug. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

mained, however, six months in prison, and at the beginning of 1587 was released, without trial or accusation, at the request of the English Queen.¹

The States could hardly be blamed for their opposition to the Earl's administration, for he had thrown himself completely into the arms of a faction, whose object was to vilipend and traduce them, and it was now difficult for him to recover the functions of which the Queen had deprived him. "The government they had given from themselves to me stuck in their stomachs always," he said. Thus on the one side, the States were "growing more stately than ever," and were always "jumbling underhand," while the aristocratic Earl, on his part, was resolute not to be put down by "churls and tinkers."² He was sure that the people were with him, and that, "having always been governed by some prince, they never did nor could consent to be ruled by bakers, brewers, and hired advocates. I know they hate them,"³ said this high-born tribune of the people. He was much disgusted with the many-headed chimæra, the monstrous republic, with which he found himself in such unceasing conflict, and was disposed to take a manful stand. "I have been fain of late," he said, "to set the better leg foremost, to handle some of my masters somewhat plainly, for they thought I would droop; and whatsoever becomes of me, you shall hear I will keep my reputation, or die for it."⁴

But one great accusation made against the churls and tinkers, and bakers and hired advocates, and Mr. Paul Buys at their head, was that they were liberal towards the Papists. They were willing that Catholics should remain in the country and exercise the rights of citizens, provided they conducted themselves like good citizens. For this toleration—a lesson which statesmen like Buys and Barneveld had learned in the school of William the Silent—the opposition-party were de-

¹ Bor. II. 725, 726, 889, 890. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 165. Wagenaar, viii. 161-163. Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 352, 362-364, 386, 436.

Leycester to Burghley, 20 July,

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1586. B. Clerk to same, 24 July, 1586. (S. P. Office MSS.)

² Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 312.

³ Ibid. 424.

⁴ Ibid. 312.

nounced as bolsterers of Papists, and Papists themselves at heart, and "worshippers of idolatrous idols."¹

From words, too, the government of Leicester passed to acts. Seventy papists were banished from the city of Utrecht at the time of the arrest of Buys.² The Queen had constantly enforced upon Leicester the importance of dealing justly with the Catholics in the Netherlands, on the ground that they might be as good patriots and were as much interested in the welfare of their country as were the Protestants;³ and he was especially enjoined "not to meddle in matters of religion." This wholesome advice it would have been quite impossible for the Earl, under the guidance of Reingault, Burgrave, and Stephen Perret, to carry out. He protested that he should have liked to treat Papists and Calvinists "with indifference," but that it had proved impossible; that the Catholics were perpetually plotting with the Spanish faction, and that no towns were safe except those in which Papists had been excluded from office. "They love the Pope above all," he said, "and the Prince of Parma hath continual intelligence with them." Nor was it Catholics alone who gave the governor trouble. He was likewise very busy in putting down other denominations that differed from the Calvinists. "Your Majesty will not believe," he said, "the number of sects that are in most towns; especially Anabaptists, Families of Love, Georgians, and I know not what. The godly and good ministers were molested by them in many places, and ready to give over; and even such diversities grew among magistrates in towns, being caused by some sedition-sowers here."⁴ It is however, satisfactory to reflect that the anabaptists and families of love, although discouraged and frowned upon, were not burned alive, buried alive, drowned in dungeons, and roasted at slow fires, as had been the case with them and with

¹ Digges's 'Advertisement of the present State,' &c. (S. P. Office MS. before cited.)

² B. Clerk to Burghlay, 24 July,

1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Leicester to the Queen, 26 June,

1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Ibid.

every other species of Protestants, by thousands and tens of thousands, so long as Charles V. and Philip II. had ruled the territory of that commonwealth. Humanity had acquired something by the war which the Netherlanders had been waging for twenty years, and no man or woman was ever put to death for religious causes after the establishment of the republic.

With his hands thus full of business, it was difficult for the Earl to obey the Queen's command not to meddle in religious matters ; for he was not of the stature of William the Silent, and could not comprehend that the great lesson taught by the sixteenth century was that men were not to meddle with men in matters of religion.

But besides his especial nightmare—Mr. Paul Buys—the governor-general had a whole set of incubi in the Norris family. Probably no two persons ever detested each other more cordially than did Leicester and Sir John Norris. Sir John had been commander of the forces in the Netherlands before Leicester's arrival, and was unquestionably a man of larger experience than the Earl. He had, however, as Walsingham complained, acquired by his services in "countries where neither discipline military nor religion carried any sway," a very rude and licentious kind of government. "Would to God," said the secretary, "that, with his value and courage, he carried the mind and reputation of a religious soldier."¹ But that was past praying for. Sir John was proud, untractable, turbulent, very difficult to manage. He hated Leicester, and was furious with Sir William Pelham, whom Leicester had made marshal of the camp.² He complained, not unjustly, that from the first place in the army, which he had occupied in the Netherlands, he had been reduced to the fifth.³ The governor-general—who chose to call Sir John the son of his ancient enemy, the Earl of Sussex—often denounced him in good set terms. "His brother Edward is as ill as he," he said, "but John is right the late Earl

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 222.

² "He stomachs greatly the Marshal," said Leicester. Ibid. 379. ³ Ibid. 380.

of Sussex' son ; he will so dissemble and crouch, and so cunningly carry his doings, as no man living would imagine that there were half the malice or vindictive mind that plainly his words prove to be."¹ Leicester accused him of constant insubordination, insolence, and malice, complained of being traduced by him everywhere in the Netherlands and in England, and declared that he was followed about by "a pack of lewd audacious fellows," whom the Earl vowed he would hang, one and all, before he had done with them.² He swore openly, in presence of all his camp, that he would hang Sir John likewise ; so that both the brothers, who had never been afraid of anything since they had been born into the world, affected to be in danger of their lives.³

The Norrises were on bad terms with many officers—with Sir William Pelham of course, with "old Reade," Lord North, Roger Williams, Hohenlo, Essex, and other nobles—but with Sir Philip Sidney, the gentle and chivalrous, they were friends.⁴ Sir John had quarrelled in former times—according to Leicester—with Hohenlo and even with the "good and brave" La Noue, of the iron arm ; "for his pride," said the Earl, "was the spirit of the devil."⁵ The governor complained every day of his malignity, and vowed that he "neither regarded the cause of God, nor of his prince, nor country."⁶

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 301.

² 'Notes of Remembrances, by Mr. Edward Norris,' Sept. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ "His Excellency did not only not mislike withal that Lord North, Captain William, and others, should rail at him, but in his own presence did suffer divers captains and noblemen to brave him, and did himself also grow in great rages against him, disallowing him openly for wise man, honest man, or soldier; preferring many men's wisdom and experience, saying his patience and slyness should not save him, not sparing openly to threaten him to hang him; so that of every honest man it is feared lest *some mischief shall shortly be wrought him.*" Ibid.

⁴ Sir John Norris to Walsingham, 25 Oct. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁵ Leicester to Wilkes, 22 Aug. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁶ Ibid.

Wilkes, on the contrary, had a very favourable opinion of Norris, and always secretly defended him to the Queen's government against Leicester's charges. "Besides the value, wisdom, and many other good parts that are in the man," he said, "I have noted a wonderful patience and modesty in bearing many apparent injuries done unto him, which I have known to be countenanced and nourished, contrary to all reason, to disgrace him. Whatsoever may be reported maliciously to his disadvantage, I dare avouch that the Queen hath not a second subject of his place and quality so able to serve in these countries as he." Wilkes to Burghley, 17 Nov. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

He consorted chiefly with Sir Thomas Cecil,¹ governor of Brill, son of Lord Burghley, and therefore no friend to Leicester; but the Earl protested that "Master Thomas should bear small rule,"² so long as he was himself governor-general. "Now I have Pelham and Stanley, we shall do well enough," he said, "though my young master would countenance him. I will be master while I remain here, will they, nill they."³

Edward Norris, brother of Sir John, gave the governor almost as much trouble as he; but the treasurer Norris, uncle to them both, was, if possible, more odious to him than all. He was—if half Leicester's accusations are to be believed—a most infamous peculator. One-third of the money sent by the Queen for the soldiers stuck in his fingers. He paid them their wretched four-pence a-day in depreciated coin, so that for their "naughty money they could get but naughty ware."⁴ Never was such "fleecing of poor soldiers," said Leicester.⁵

On the other hand, Sir John maintained that his uncle's accounts were always ready for examination, and earnestly begged the home-government not to condemn that functionary without a hearing.⁶ For himself, he complained that he was uniformly kept in the background, left in ignorance of important enterprises, and sent on difficult duty with inadequate forces. It was believed that Leicester's course was inspired by envy, lest any military triumph that might be gained should redound to the glory of Sir John, one of the first commanders of the age, rather than to that of the governor-general. He was perpetually thwarted, crossed, calumniated, subjected to coarse and indecent insults, even from such brave men as Lord North and Roger Williams, and in the very presence of the commander-in-chief, so that his talents were of no avail, and he was most anxious to be gone from the country.⁷

¹ Letter to Wilkes, MS. last cited.

² Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 380.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid. 299, 303.

⁵ Leicester to the Queen, 27 June,

1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁶ Sir J. Norris to Burghley, 25 May,

1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁷ 'Notes of Remembrance,' by Ed. Norris, MS. before cited. "His Ex-

Thus with the tremendous opposition formed to his government in the States-General, the incessant bickerings with the Norrises, the peculations of the treasurer, the secret negotiations with Spain, and the impossibility of obtaining money from home for himself or for his starving little army, the Earl was in anything but a comfortable position. He was severely censured in England; but he doubted, with much reason, whether there were many who would take his office, and spend twenty thousand pounds sterling out of their own pockets, as he had done.¹ The Earl was generous and brave as man could be, full of wit, quick of apprehension; but inordinately vain, arrogant, and withal easily led by designing persons. He stood up manfully for the cause in which he was embarked, and was most strenuous in his demands for money. "Personally he cared," he said, "not sixpence for his post, but would give five thousand sixpences, and six thousand shillings beside, to be rid of it;"² but it was contrary to his dignity to "stand hucking with the States" for his salary. "Is it reason," he asked, "that I, being sent from so great a prince as our sovereign is, must come to strangers to beg my entertainment. If they are to pay me, why is there no remembrance made of it by her Majesty's letters, or some of the lords?"³

The Earl and those around him perpetually and vehemently urged upon the Queen to reconsider her decision, and accept the sovereignty of the Provinces at once. There was no other

cellency doth wonderfully hate my brother I only gather these causes," said Captain Norris: "first, an envy of some unworthy men about him, who put into his Excellency's head that as long as Norris were here, the honour of everything would be attributed to him, and that he would be a continual hindrance to the course that his Excellency meant to hold concerning some things, neither should his Excellency have any absolute commandment as long as his credit continued."

¹ Leicester to the Queen, 27 June, 1586. "I pray God I may live to see you employ some of them that are thus careless of me, to see whether

they will spend 20,000*l*. of their own for you in seven months; but all is in mine own heart so little, though the greatest portion of all my land pay for it, so your Majesty do well accept of it," &c.

The Earl expended—according to his own report to the States—three hundred thousand florins (30,000*l*.) in the course of the year 1587. (Bor, II. 783. Hoofl, Vervolgh, 206.) Of course, he had a claim for such disbursements on the Queen's exchequer, and was like to enforce it at the proper season.

² 'Leyc. Corresp.' 378.

³ Ibid. 323.

remedy for the distracted state of the country—no other safeguard for England. The Netherland people anxiously, eagerly desired it. Her Majesty was adored by all the inhabitants, who would gladly hang the fellows called the States. Lord North was of this opinion—so was Cavendish : Leicester had always held it. “Sure I am,” he said, “there is but one way for our safety, and that is, that her Majesty may take that upon her which I fear she will not.”¹ Thomas Wilkes, who now made his appearance on the scene, held the same language. This distinguished civilian had been sent by the Queen, early in August, to look into the state of Netherland affairs. Leicester having expressly urged the importance of selecting as wise a politician as could be found—because the best man in England would hardly be found a match for the dullards and drunkards, as it was the fashion there to call the Dutch statesmen²—had selected Wilkes. After fulfilling this important special mission, he was immediately afterwards to return to the Netherlands as English member of the state-council, at forty shillings a-day, in the place of “little Hal Killigrew,” whom Leicester pronounced a “quicker and stouter fellow” than he had at first taken him for, although he had always thought well of him. The other English counsellor, Dr. Bartholomew Clerk, was to remain, and the Earl declared that he too, whom he had formerly undervalued, and thought to have “little stuff in him,” was now “increasing greatly in understanding.”³ But notwithstanding this intellectual progress, poor Bartholomew, who was no beginner, was most anxious to retire. He was a man of peace, a professor, a doctor of laws, fonder of the learned leisure and the trim gardens of England than of the scenes which now surrounded him. “I beseech your good Lordship to consider,” he dismally observed to Burghley, “what a hard case it is for a man that these fifteen years hath had *vitam sedentariam*, un-

¹ Leicester to Burghley, 10 Aug. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Same to same, 20 July, 1586.

³ ‘Leyc. Corresp.’ 375.

worthily in a place judicial, always in his long robe, and who, twenty-four years since, was a public reader in the University (and therefore cannot be young), to come now among guns and drums, tumbling up and down, day and night, over waters and banks, dykes and ditches, upon every occasion that falleth out; hearing many insolences with silence, bearing many hard measures with patience—a course most different from my nature, and most unmeet for him that hath ever professed learning.”¹

Wilkes was of sterner stuff. Always ready to follow the camp and to face the guns and drums with equanimity, and endowed beside with keen political insight, he was more competent than most men to unravel the confused skein of Netherland politics. He soon found that the Queen’s secret negotiations with Spain, and the general distrust of her intentions in regard to the Provinces, were like to have fatal consequences. Both he and Leicester painted the anxiety of the Netherland people as to the intention of her Majesty in vivid colours.²

The Queen could not make up her mind—in the very midst of the Greenwich secret conferences, already described—to accept the Netherland sovereignty. “She gathereth from your letter,” wrote Walsingham, “that the only salve for this sore is to make herself proprietary of the country, and to put in such an army as may be able to make head to the enemy. These two things being so contrary to her Majesty’s disposition—the one, for that it breedeth a doubt of a perpetual war, the other, for that it requireth an increase of charges—do *marvellously distract her, and make her repent that ever she entered into the action.*”³

Upon the great subject of the sovereignty, therefore, she was unable to adopt the resolution so much desired by Leicester and by the people of the Provinces; but she answered the

¹ B. Clerk to Burghley, 11 Aug. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Wilkes to the Queen, 7 Aug. 1586. Leicester to the Queen, 27 June, 1586.

(S. P. Office MSS.)

³ Bruce’s ‘*Leyn. Corresp.*’ 340, 9th July, 1586.

Earl's communications concerning Maurice and Hohenlo, Sir John Norris and the treasurer, in characteristic but affectionate language. And thus she wrote :—

“ Rob, I am afraid you will suppose, by my wandering writings, that a midsummer's moon hath taken large possession of my brains this month ; but you must needs take things as they come in my head, though order be left behind me. When I remember your request to have a discreet and honest man that may carry my mind, and see how all goes there, I have chosen this bearer (Thomas Wilkes), whom you know and have made good trial of. I have fraught him full of my concepts of those country matters, and imparted what way I mind to take and what is fit for you to use. I am sure you can credit him, and so I will be short with these few notes. First, that Count Maurice and Count Hollock (Hohenlo) find themselves trusted of you, esteemed of me, and to be carefully regarded, if ever peace should happen, and of that assure them on my word, that yet never deceived any. And for Norris and other captains that *voluntarily, without commandment, have many years ventured their lives and won our nation honour and themselves fame*, let them not be discouraged by any means, neither by new-come men nor by old trained soldiers elsewhere. If there be fault in using of soldiers, or making of profit by them, let them hear of it without open shame, and doubt not I will well chasten them therefore. It frets me not a little that the poor soldiers that hourly venture life should want their due, that well deserve rather reward ; and look, in whom the fault may truly be proved, let them smart therefore. And if the treasurer be found untrue or negligent, according to desert he shall be used. But you know my old wont, that love not to discharge from office without desert. God forbid ! I pray you let this bearer know what may be learned herein, and for the treasure I have joined Sir Thomas Shirley to see all this money discharged in due sort, where it needeth and behoveth.

“ Now will I end, that do imagine I talk still with you, and therefore loathly say farewell one hundred thousand times ;

though ever I pray God bless you from all harm, and save you from all foes. With my million and legion of thanks for all your pains and cares,

“As you know ever the same,

“E. R.

“P. S. Let Wilkes see that he is acceptable to you. If anything there be that W. shall desire answer of be such as you would have but me to know, write it to myself. You know I can keep both others’ counsel and mine own. Mistrust not that anything you would have kept shall be disclosed by me, for although this bearer ask many things, yet you may answer him such as you shall think meet, and write to me the rest.”¹

Thus, not even her favourite Leicester’s misrepresentations could make the Queen forget her ancient friendship for “her own crow ;” but meantime the relations between that “bunch of brethren,” black Norris and the rest, and Pelham, Hollock, and other high officers in Leicester’s army, had grown worse than ever.

One August evening there was a supper-party at Count Hollock’s² quarters in Gertruydenberg. A military foray into

Aug. 6, 1586. Brabant had just taken place, under the lead of the Count, and of the Lord Marshal, Sir William Pelham. The marshal had requested Lord Willoughby, with his troop of horse and five hundred foot, to join in the enterprise, but, as usual, particular pains had been taken that Sir John Norris should know nothing of the affair.³ Pelham and Hollock—who was “greatly in love with Mr. Pelham”⁴—had invited several other gentlemen high in Leicester’s confidence to accompany the expedition ; and, among the rest, Sir Philip Sidney, telling him

¹ Queen to Leicester, 19 July, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² It has been already stated that Hohenlo was uniformly called Hollach or Hollock by the English and French, and very often by the Netherlanders. In our text, sometimes the one, sometimes the other, appellation is used. The reader will understand that there

was but one of the name in the Provinces—Count Philip William Hohenlo or Hohenlohe, oftener called Hollock.

³ “Whereunto the colonel-general must not in anywise be made privy.”

⁴ ‘Advertisement of a difference at Gertruydenberg.’ 8 Aug. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁵ Bruce’s ‘Leyc. Corresp.’ 374.

that he "should see some good service." Sidney came accordingly, in great haste, from Flushing, bringing along with him Edward Norris—that hot-headed young man, who, according to Leicester, "greatly governed his elder brother"—but they arrived at Gertruydenberg too late. The foray was over, and the party—"having burned a village, and killed some boors"—were on their return. Sidney, not perhaps much regretting the loss of his share in this rather inglorious shooting party, went down to the water-side, accompanied by Captain Norris, to meet Hollock and the other commanders.

As the Count stepped on shore he scowled ominously, and looked very much out of temper.

"What has come to Hollock?" whispered Captain Patton, a Scotchman, to Sidney. "Has he a quarrel with any of the party? Look at his face! He means mischief to somebody."

But Sidney was equally amazed at the sudden change in the German general's countenance, and as unable to explain it.

Soon afterwards, the whole party, Hollock, Lewis William of Nassau, Lord Carew, Lord Essex, Lord Willoughby, both the Sidneys, Roger Williams, Pelham, Edward Norris, and the rest, went to the Count's lodgings, where they supped, and afterwards set themselves seriously to drinking.

Norris soon perceived that he was no welcome guest; for he was not—like Sidney—a stranger to the deep animosity which had long existed between Sir John Norris and Sir William Pelham and his friends. The carouse was a tremendous one, as usually was the case where Hollock was the Amphitryon, and, as the potations grew deeper, an intention became evident on the part of some of the company to behave unhandsomely to Norris.

For a time the young Captain ostentatiously restrained himself, very much after the fashion of those meek individuals who lay their swords on the tavern-table, with "God grant I may have no need of thee!" The custom was then prevalent at banquets for the revellers to pledge each other in rotation, each draining a great cup, and exacting the same feat from

his neighbour, who then emptied his goblet as a challenge to his next comrade.

The Lord Marshal took a beaker, and called out to Edward Norris. "I drink to the health of my Lord Norris, and of my lady, your mother." So saying, he emptied his glass.

The young man did not accept the pledge.

"Your Lordship knows," he said somewhat sullenly, "that I am not wont to drink deep. Mr. Sidney there can tell you that, for my health's sake, I have drank no wine these eight days. If your Lordship desires the pleasure of seeing me drunk, I am not of the same mind. I pray you at least to take a smaller glass.

Sir William insisted on the pledge. Norris then, in no very good humour, emptied his cup to the Earl of Essex.

Essex responded by draining a goblet to Count Hollock.

"A Norris's father," said the young Earl, as he pledged the Count, who was already very drunk, and looking blacker than ever.

"An 'orse's father—an 'orse's father!" growled Hollock; "I never drink to horses, nor to their fathers either:" and with this wonderful witticism he declined the pledge.

Essex explained that the toast was Lord Norris, father of the Captain; but the Count refused to understand, and held fiercely, and with damnable iteration, to his jest.

The Earl repeated his explanation several times with no better success. Norris meanwhile sat swelling with wrath, but said nothing.

Again the Lord Marshal took the same great glass, and emptied it to the young Captain.

Norris, not knowing exactly what course to take, placed the glass at the side of his plate, and glared grimly at Sir William.

Pelham was furious. Reaching over the table, he shoved the glass towards Norris with an angry gesture.

"Take your glass, Captain Norris," he cried; "and if you have a mind to jest, seek other companions. I am not to be trifled with; therefore, I say, pledge me at once."

"Your Lordship shall not force me to drink more wine than I list," returned the other. "It is your pleasure to take advantage of your military rank. Were we both at home, you would be glad to be my companion."

Norris was hard beset, and although his language was studiously moderate, it was not surprising that his manner should be somewhat insolent. The veteran Lord Marshal, on the other hand, had distinguished himself on many battle-fields, but his deportment at this banqueting-table was not much to his credit. He paused a moment, and Norris, too, held his peace, thinking that his enemy would desist.

It was but for a moment.

"Captain Norris," cried Pelham, "I bid you pledge me without more ado. Neither you nor your best friends shall use me as you list. I am better born than you and your brother, the colonel-general, and the whole of you."

"I warn you to say nothing disrespectful against my brother," replied the Captain. "As for yourself, I know how to respect your age and superior rank."

"Drink, drink, drink!" roared the old Marshal. "I tell you I am better born than the best of you. I have advanced you all too, and you know it; therefore drink to me."

Sir William was as logical as men in their cups are prone to be.

"Indeed, you have behaved well to my brother Thomas," answered Norris, suddenly becoming very courteous, "and for this I have ever loved your Lordship, and would do you any service."

"Well, then," said the Marshal, becoming tender in his turn, "forget what hath past this night, and do as you would have done before."

"Very well said, indeed!" cried Sir Philip Sidney, trying to help the matter into the smoother channel towards which it was tending.

Norris, seeing that the eyes of the whole company were upon them, took the glass accordingly, and rose to his feet.

"My Lord Marshal," he said, "you have done me more wrong this night than you can easily make satisfaction for. But I am unwilling that any trouble or offence should grow through me. Therefore once more I pledge you."

He raised the cup to his lips. At that instant Hollock, to whom nothing had been said, and who had spoken no word since his happy remark about the horse's father, suddenly indulged in a more practical jest; and seizing the heavy gilt cover of a silver vase, hurled it at the head of Norris. It struck him full on the forehead, cutting him to the bone. The Captain, stunned for a moment, fell back in his chair, with the blood running down his eyes and face. The Count, always a man of few words, but prompt in action, now drew his dagger, and strode forward, with the intention of despatching him upon the spot. Sir Philip Sidney threw his arms around Hollock, however, and, with the assistance of others in the company, succeeded in dragging him from the room. The affair was over in a few seconds.

Norris, coming back to consciousness, sat for a moment as one amazed, rubbing the blood out of his eyes; then rose from the table to seek his adversary; but he was gone.

Soon afterwards he went to his lodgings. The next morning he was advised to leave the town as speedily as possible; for as it was under the government of Hollock, and filled with his soldiers, he was warned that his life would not be safe there an hour. Accordingly he went to his boat, accompanied only by his man and his page, and so departed with his broken head, breathing vengeance against Hollock, Pelham, Leicester, and the whole crew, by whom he had been thus abused.

The next evening there was another tremendous carouse at the Count's, and, says the reporter of the preceding scene, "they were all on such good terms, that not one of the company had falling band or ruff left about his neck. All were clean torn away, and yet there was no blood drawn."¹

¹ 'Advertisement of a Difference at Gertruydenberg,' 8 August, 1586. T. Doyley to Burghley, 8 Aug. 1586. B. Clerk to same, 11 Aug. 1586.

F. Norris to Leicester, 21 Nov. 1586. (S. P. Office MSS.) Compare Bor. II. 786-788. Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 390-392.

Edward Norris—so soon as might be afterwards—sent a cartel to the Count, demanding mortal combat with sword and dagger.¹ Sir Philip Sidney bore the message. Sir John Norris, of course, warmly and violently espoused the cause of his brother, and was naturally more incensed against the Lord Marshal than ever, for Sir William Pelham was considered the cause of the whole affray. “Even if the quarrel is to be excused by drink,” said an eye-witness, “’tis but a slender defence for my Lord to excuse himself by his cups; and often drink doth bewray men’s humours and unmask their malice. Certainly the Count Hollock thought to have done a pleasure to the company in killing him.”²

Nothing could be more ill-timed than this quarrel, or more vexatious to Leicester. The Count—although considering himself excessively injured at being challenged by a simple captain and an untitled gentleman, whom he had attempted to murder—consented to waive his privilege, and grant the meeting.

Leicester interposed, however, to delay, and, if possible, to patch up the affair. They were on the eve of active military operations, and it was most vexatious for the commander-in-chief to see, as he said, “the quarrel with the enemy changed to private revenge among ourselves.” The intended duel did not take place, for various influential personages succeeded in deferring the meeting. Then came the battle of Zutphen. Sidney fell, and Hollock was dangerously wounded in the attack which was soon afterwards made upon the fort. He

I have painted this uproarious scene thus minutely and in detail, because its consequences upon the relations between England and Holland, between Leicester, the Queen, and the Norrises, Pelham, Hohenlo, and others, were so long, complicated, and important, because the brawl, although brutal and vulgar, assumed the dignity of a political matter; because, on account of the distinguished personages engaged in it, and the epoch at which it occurred, the event furnishes us with a valuable interior pic-

ture of English and Dutch military life; and because, lastly, in the MSS. which I have consulted, are preserved the *spissima verba* of the actors in the riot. It is superfluous to repeat what has so often been stated, that no historical personage is ever made, in the text, to say or write anything, save what, on ample evidence, he is known to have said or written.

¹ Bor, *ubi sup.* Bruce’s ‘Leyc. Corresp.’ 474.

² ‘Advertisement,’ &c. MS. already cited.

was still pressed to afford the promised satisfaction, however, and agreed to do so whenever he should rise from his bed.¹

Strange to say, the Count considered Leicester, throughout the whole business, to have taken part against him.²

Yet there is no doubt whatever that the Earl—who detested the Norrises, and was fonder of Pelham than of any man living—uniformly narrated the story most unjustly, to the discredit of the young Captain. He considered him extremely troublesome, represented him as always quarrelling with some one—with Colonel Morgan, Roger Williams, old Reade, and all the rest—while the Lord Marshal, on the contrary, was depicted as the mildest of men. “This I must say,” he observed, “that all present, except my two nephews (the Sidneys), who are not here yet, declare the greatest fault to be in Edward Norris, and that he did most arrogantly use the Marshal.”³

It is plain, however, that the old Marshal, under the influence of wine, was at least quite as much to blame as the young Captain; and Sir Philip Sidney sufficiently showed his sense of the matter by being the bearer of Edward Norris’s cartel. After Sidney’s death, Sir John Norris, in his letter of condolence to Walsingham for the death of his illustrious son-in-law, expressed the deeper regret at his loss because Sir Philip’s opinion had been that the Norrises were wronged.⁴ Hollock had conducted himself like a lunatic, but this he was apt to do whether in his cups or not. He was always for killing some one or another on the slightest provocation, and,

¹ Bor, II. 786–788. Hoofl, Vervolgh, 209.

² Letter of Hohenlo, in Bor, III. 123 *seq.*

³ Bruce’s ‘Leyce. Corresp.’ 391.

⁴ “In all actions,” wrote Sir J. Norris to Burghley, “I am crossed, and sought to be disgraced, and suffered to be braved by the worst and simplest in the company, only to draw me into quarrels. These things I am fain to endure, lest the hindrance of the service should be laid to my charge—a thing greatly sought for. . . . The

dishonourable violence offered to my brother in Count Hollock’s house, is so coldly proceeded in as I fear the despair of orderly repairing his honour will drive him to a more dangerous course, and, in truth, it is used as if we were the basest in the company.” Sir J. Norris to Burghley, 16 Aug. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁵ J. Norris to Walsingham, 25 Oct. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.) B. Clerk to Burghley, 11 Aug. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

while the dog-star of 1586 was raging, it was not his fault if he had not already despatched both Edward Norris and the objectionable "Mr. P. B."

For these energetic demonstrations against Leicester's enemies he considered himself entitled to the Earl's eternal gratitude, and was deeply disgusted at his apparent coldness. The governor was driven almost to despair by these quarrels.

His colonel-general, his lord marshal, his lieutenant-general, were all at daggers drawn. "Would God I were rid of this place!" he exclaimed. "What man living would go to the field and have his officers divided almost into mortal quarrel? One blow but by any of their lackeys brings us altogether by the ears."¹

It was clear that there was not room enough on the Netherland soil for the Earl of Leicester and the brothers Norris. The Queen, while apparently siding with the Earl, intimated to Sir John that she did not disapprove his conduct, that she should probably recall him to England, and that she should send him back to the Provinces after the Earl had left that country.²

Such had been the position of the governor-general towards the Queen, towards the States-General, and towards his own countrymen, during the year 1586.

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 392.

² "I had not much to do," wrote Wilkes to Sir John, "to re-establish in her Majesty and Mr. Secretary a singular good opinion of you and your actions. . . . Believe me, I do not find any man on that side equal with you in her Majesty's grace. She protests to me she will not have your safety hazarded for any treasure, and hath resolved to revoke you. . . . I do find a disposition in her Majesty to return you thither again, after his Excellency shall be come home, which her Majesty meaneth directly, although there is much variety of opinion here, whether it be fit to revoke him or not. Such

as desire the good of that State do hold that question affirmatively, but such as do not love him (who are the greater number) do maintain the negative. Her Majesty and her council do greatly stagger at the excessive charge of those wars under his Excellency's government for the past six months, affirming (as it is true) that the realm of England is not able to supply the moiety of that charge, notwithstanding the necessity of the defence of those countries is so conjoined with her Majesty's own safety as the same is not to be abandoned." Wilkes to Sir J. Norris, 23 Sept. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

CHAPTER XI.

Drake in the Netherlands—Good Results of his Visit—The Babington Conspiracy—Leicester decides to visit England—Exchange of parting Compliments.

LATE in the autumn of the same year an Englishman arrived in the Netherlands, bearer of despatches from the Queen. He had been entrusted by her Majesty with a special mission to the States-General, and he had soon an interview with that assembly at the Hague.

He was a small man, apparently forty-five years of age, of a fair but somewhat weather-stained complexion, with light-brown, closely-curling hair, an expansive forehead, a clear blue eye, rather common-place features, a thin, brown, pointed beard, and a slight moustache. Though low of stature, he was broad-chested, with well-knit limbs. His hands, which were small and nervous, were brown and callous with the marks of toil. There was something in his brow and glance not to be mistaken, and which men willingly call master; yet he did not seem to have sprung of the born magnates of the earth. He wore a heavy gold chain about his neck, and it might be observed that upon the light full sleeves of his slashed doublet the image of a small ship on a terrestrial globe was curiously and many times embroidered.

It was not the first time that he had visited the Netherlands. Thirty years before the man had been apprentice on board a small lugger, which traded between the English coast and the ports of Zeeland. Emerging in early boyhood from his parental mansion—an old boat, turned bottom upwards on a sandy down—he had naturally taken to the sea, and his master, dying childless not long afterwards, bequeathed to him the lugger. But in time his spirit, too much confined

by coasting in the narrow seas, had taken a bolder flight. He had risked his hard-earned savings in a voyage with the old slave-trader, John Hawkins—whose exertions, in what was then considered an honourable and useful vocation, had been rewarded by Queen Elizabeth with her special favour, and with a coat of arms, the crest whereof was a negro's head, proper, chained—but the lad's first and last enterprise in this field was unfortunate. Captured by Spaniards, and only escaping with life, he determined to revenge himself on the whole Spanish nation ; and this was considered a most legitimate proceeding according to the "sea divinity" in which he had been schooled. His subsequent expeditions against the Spanish possessions in the West Indies were eminently successful, and soon the name of Francis Drake rang through the world, and startled Philip in the depths of his Escorial. The first Englishman, and the second of any nation, he then ploughed his memorable "furrow round the earth," carrying amazement and destruction to the Spaniards as he sailed, and after three years brought to the Queen treasure enough, as it was asserted, to maintain a war with the Spanish King for seven years, and to pay himself and companions, and the merchant-adventurers who had participated in his enterprise, forty-seven pounds sterling for every pound invested in the voyage. The speculation had been a fortunate one both for himself and for the kingdom.

The terrible Sea-King was one of the great types of the sixteenth century. The self-helping private adventurer, in his little vessel the 'Golden Hind,' one hundred tons burthen, had waged successful war against a mighty empire, and had shown England how to humble Philip. When he again set foot on his native soil he was followed by admiring crowds, and became the favourite hero of romance and ballad ; for it was not the ignoble pursuit of gold alone, through toil and peril, which had endeared his name to the nation. The popular instinct recognized that the true means had been found at last for rescuing England and Protestantism from

the overshadowing empire of Spain. The Queen visited him in his 'Golden Hind,' and gave him the honour of knighthood.

The treaty between the United Netherlands and England had been followed by an embargo upon English vessels, persons, and property, in the ports of Spain; and,
1585.

after five years of unwonted repose, the privateer-man again set forth with twenty-five small vessels—of which five or six only were armed—under his command, conjoined with that of General Carlisle. This time the voyage was undertaken with full permission and assistance of the Queen who, however, intended to disavow him, if she should find such a step convenient.¹ This was the expedition in which Philip Sidney had desired to take part. The Queen watched its result with intense anxiety, for the fate of her Netherland adventure was thought to be hanging on the issue. "Upon Drake's voyage, in very truth, dependeth the life and death of the cause, according to man's judgment," said Walsingham.²

The issue was encouraging, even if the voyage—as a mercantile speculation—proved not so brilliant as the previous enterprises of Sir Francis had been. He returned in the midsummer of 1586, having captured and brandschatzed St. Domingo and Carthagená, and burned St. Augustine. "A fearful man to the King of Spain is Sir Francis Drake," said Lord Burghley.³ Nevertheless, the Queen and the Lord-Treasurer—as we have shown by the secret conferences at Greenwich—had, notwithstanding these successes, expressed a more earnest desire for peace than ever.

A simple, sea-faring Englishman, with half-a-dozen miserable little vessels, had carried terror into the Spanish possessions all over the earth: but even then the great Queen had not learned to rely on the valour of her volunteers against her most formidable enemy.⁴

¹ 'Leyc. Corresp.' 173.

² Ibid. 341.

³ Ibid. 199.

⁴ For the life and adventures of

Drake was, however, bent on another enterprise. The preparations for Philip's great fleet had been going steadily forward in Lisbon, Cadiz, and other ports of Spain and Portugal, and, despite assurances to the contrary, there was a growing belief that England was to be invaded. To destroy those ships before the monarch's face, would be, indeed, to "sing his beard." But whose arm was daring enough for such a stroke? Whose but that of the Devonshire skipper who had already accomplished so much?

And so Sir Francis, "a man true to his word, merciful to those under him, and hating nothing so much as idleness,"¹ had come to the Netherlands to talk over his project with the States-General, and with the Dutch merchants and sea-captains.² His visit was not unfruitful. As a body the assembly did nothing; but they recommended that in every maritime city of Holland and Zeeland one or two ships should be got ready, to participate in all the future enterprises of Sir Francis and his comrades.³

The martial spirit of volunteer sailors, and the keen instinct of mercantile speculation, were relied upon—exactly as

Drake, see Fuller, 'The Holy State and the Profane State,' *in voce*. Stowe's 'Chronicle,' 806-812. Em. v. Meteren, 175, *seq.* "The World Encompassed," and particularly the 'Life, Voyages, and Exploits of Admiral Sir Francis Drake.' By John Barrow. 1843.

¹ Fuller.

² Wagenaar, viii. 233-234, who is, however, mistaken in saying that "they had no ears for Drake in the Netherlands."

³ "The voyage of Sir Francis Drake into these countries," wrote Wilkes, "is not likely to be unfruitful, although at his arrival he found no disposition in the States and people at all to assent of his motions. They cannot yield to assist his voyage with any general contribution, but are contented to deal with the inhabitants of the principal maritime towns, to furnish in every of them a ship or two, according to the ability of the merchants there residing, from whom the States-General, now assembled at the Hague, do ex-

pect a speedy answer and resolution; so as if her Majesty shall determine that Sir F. Drake do venture again to the Indies, it is *not to be doubted that he shall have some good assistance from hence*. Of what necessity it is that the Queen's principal enemy be attempted that way, your honour can best perceive; but we find it more than probable here, that if *he may enjoy his Indies quietly, he will make her Majesty and these countries soon weary of their defence*. I have partly instructed Sir F. Drake of the state of these countries. How and in what sort my Lord of Leicester departeth hence, he hath best discerned by his own experience, which, because it is long to be written, I am bold to refer your honour to his declaration. I do find the state of things here so disjointed and unsettled, that I have just cause to fear some dangerous alteration in the absence of our governor. Therefore I beseech you, as you tender *the preservation of her Majesty's estate, depending, as you*

in England—to furnish men, ships, and money, for these daring and profitable adventures. The foundation of a still more intimate connection between England and Holland was laid, and thenceforth Dutchmen and Englishmen fought side by side, on land and sea, wherever a blow was to be struck in the cause of human freedom against despotic Spain.

The famous Babington conspiracy, discovered by Walsingham's "travail and cost," had come to convince the Queen and her counsellors—if further proof were not superfluous—that her throne and life were both incompatible with Philip's deep designs, and that to keep that monarch out of the Netherlands was as vital to her as to keep him out of England. "She is forced by this discovery to countenance the cause by all outward means she may," said Walsingham, "for it appeareth unto her most plain, that *unless she had entered into the action, she had been utterly undone*, and that if she do not prosecute the same she cannot continue."¹ The Secretary had sent Leicester information at an early day of the great secret, begging his friend to "make the letter a heretic after he had read the same," and expressing the opinion that "the matter, if well handled, would break the neck of all dangerous practices during her Majesty's reign."²

The tragedy of Mary Stuart—a sad but inevitable portion of the vast drama in which the emancipation of England and Holland, and, through them, of half Christendom, was accomplished—approached its catastrophe; and Leicester could not restrain his anxiety for her immediate execution. He reminded Walsingham that the great seal had been put upon a warrant for her execution for a less crime seventeen years before, on the occasion of the Northumberland and Westmorland rebellion. "For who can warrant these villains

know, upon the maintenance of this, that you will procure some speedy resolution at home, and the return of some governor of wisdom and value, to reunite these distracted provinces, who, for lack of a head, are apt enough to

be the workers of their own ruin." Wilkes to Walsingham, 17 Nov. 1586 (S. P. Office MS.)

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 341.

² Ibid. 342.

from her," he said, "if that person live, or shall live any time? God forbid! And be you all stout and resolute in this speedy execution, or be condemned of all the world for ever. It is most certain, if you will have your Majesty safe, it must be done, for justice doth crave it beside policy."¹ His own personal safety was deeply compromised. "Your Lordship and I," wrote Burghley, "were very great motives in the traitors' eyes; for your Lordship there and I here should first, about one time, have been killed. Of your Lordship they thought rather of poisoning than slaying. After us two gone, they purposed her Majesty's death."²

But on this great affair of state the Earl was not swayed by such personal considerations. He honestly thought—as did all the statesmen who governed England—that English liberty, the very existence of the English commonwealth, was impossible so long as Mary Stuart lived.³ Under these circumstances he was not impatient, for a time at least, to leave the Netherlands. His administration had not been very successful. He had been led away by his own vanity, and by the flattery of artful demagogues, but the immense obstacles with which he had to contend in the Queen's wavering policy, and in the rivalry of both English and Dutch politicians, have been amply exhibited. That he had been generous, courageous, and zealous, could not be denied; and, on the whole, he had accomplished as much in the field as could have been expected of him with such meagre forces, and so barren an exchequer.⁴

¹ Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 431. (10 Oct. 1586.) See also 447.

"That the proceeding of justice against the Queen of Scots is deferred until a parliament, whereat I do greatly marvel if it should be true, considering how dangerous such delay might be, for the mischief that might in the meantime be practiced against her Majesty's person. Though some small branches of these conspiracies be taken away, yet the greater boughs are not unknown to remain. To whom it were not good, in my opinion, to give that

opportunity which might be taken, while a parliament may be called, and such a cause debated and determined," &c. Leicester to Walsingham, 9 Sept. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.' 412. (15 Sept. 1586.)

³ One of the Babington conspirators, Ralph Salisbury, was a tenant of Leicester's, and had "a farm under the very castle-wall of Denbigh." Leicester to Burghley, 29 Aug. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ "Oh Lord! who would think it

It must be confessed, however, that his leaving the Netherlands at that moment was a most unfortunate step, both for his own reputation and for the security of the Provinces. Party-spirit was running high, and a political revolution was much to be dreaded in so grave a position of affairs, both in England and Holland. The arrangements—and particularly the secret arrangements which he made at his departure—were the most fatal measures of all; but these will be described in the following chapter.

On the 31st October, the Earl announced to the state-council his intention of returning to England, stating, as the
 31 Oct.,
 1586. cause of this sudden determination, that he had been summoned to attend the parliament then sitting in Westminster. Wilkes, who was of course present, having now succeeded Killigrew as one of the two English members, observed that “the States and council used but slender entreaty to his Excellency for his stay and countenance there among them, whereat his Excellency and we that were of the council for her Majesty did not a little marvel.”¹

Some weeks later, however, upon the 21st November, Leicester summoned Barneveld, and five other of the States-
 21 Nov.,
 1586. General, to discuss the necessary measures for his departure, when those gentlemen remonstrated very earnestly upon the step, pleading the danger and confusion of affairs which must necessarily ensue. The Earl declared that he was not retiring from the country because he was offended, although he had many causes for offence: and he then alluded to the Navigation Act, to the establishment of the finance-council, and spoke of Burgrave and Reingault, for his employment of which individuals so much obloquy had been heaped upon his head. Burgrave he pronounced, as usual, a

possible,” he cried on one occasion, “for any man sent as we are, and in action for that realm (of England) chiefly, and for all Christendom also, to be so carelessly and overwillingly overthrown for ordinary wants

To-morrow and to-morrow they shall have. . . . What opportunities we have lately lost. We are ready to eat our own flesh for anger, but that cannot help.” ‘Leyc. Corresp.’ 366.

¹ Bruce’s ‘Leyc. Corresp.’ 443, note.

substantial, wise, faithful, religious personage, entitled to fullest confidence; while Reingault—who had been thrown into prison by the States on charges of fraud, peculation, and sedition—he declared to be a great financier, who had promised, on penalty of his head, to bring great sums into the treasury for carrying on the war, without any burthen to the community.”¹ Had he been able to do this, he had certainly a claim to be considered the greatest of financiers; but the promised “mountains of gold” were never discovered, and Reingault was now awaiting his trial.²

The deputies replied that the concessions upon the Navigation Act had satisfied the country, but that Reingault was a known instrument of the Spaniards, and Burgrave a mischief-making demagogue, who consorted with malignants, and sent slanderous reports concerning the States and the country to her Majesty. They had in consequence felt obliged to write private despatches to envoy Ortel in England, not because they suspected the Earl, but in order to counteract the calumnies of his chief advisers. They had urged the agent

¹ Bor, II. 777-779. Hoofd, 207-209. Wagenaar, viii. 183-187.

² “I must pray you and require you to be careful in satisfying the States touching Reingault,” said Leicester: “I did promise upon mine honour he should be brought back again, and so I have done, but I will be no butcher to the greatest monarch in the world, much less the betrayer of a man’s life, whom I myself caused to be apprehended to please them, and kept him in safe guard. And now I have been advertised of the intent in proceeding with him, and with what violence, and what some of themselves have sworn and vowed touching his death, you know, and I pray you declare, for as I will keep promise with them for the prison of the man, so do I look to have mine own honour regarded at their hands, seeing more malice than just desert against him. I take the man to have faults enough, but not capital.” Leicester to Wilkes, 20 Nov. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

Wilkes, finding that the States of

Holland were furious against Reingault, and were demanding his execution, had managed to place him under the charge of the provost-marshal of the English troops at Utrecht. When he had thus saved the culprit’s life, he informed Barneveld of what he had done, and that statesman severely censured the act, on the ground that grave consequences might follow this interposition in behalf of so signal an offender. Reingault’s life was preserved, however, and he subsequently was permitted to retire to the Spanish Netherlands, where the violent democrat and Calvinist ended his days an obedient subject of Philip II., and an exemplary papist. Wilkes to Leicester, 3 and 12 Dec. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.) Reynd, V. 82.

Burgrave accompanied the Earl to England, as his chief secretary and adviser in Netherland matters, while Deventer remained in Utrecht, principal director of the Leicesterian party, and centre of all its cabals against the States.

to bring the imprisonment of Paul Buys before her Majesty, but for that transaction Leicester boldly disclaimed all responsibility.¹

It was agreed between the Earl and the deputies that, during his absence, the whole government, civil and military, should devolve upon the state-council, and that Sir John Norris should remain in command of the English forces.²

Two days afterwards Leicester, who knew very well that a legation was about to proceed to England, without any previous concurrence on his part, summoned a committee of the States-General, together with Barneveld, into the state-council. Counsellor Wilkes on his behalf then made a speech, in which he observed that more ample communications on the part of the States were to be expected. They had in previous colloquies touched upon comparatively unimportant matters, but he now begged to be informed why these commissioners were proceeding to England, and what was the nature of their instructions. Why did not they formally offer the sovereignty of the Provinces to the Queen without conditions? That step had already been taken by Utrecht.³

The deputies conferred apart for a little while, and then replied that the proposition made by Utrecht was notoriously factious, illegal, and altogether futile. Without the sanction of all the United States, of what value was the declaration of Utrecht? Moreover the charter of that province had been recklessly violated, its government overthrown, and its leading citizens banished. The action of the Province under such circumstances was not deserving of comment; but should it appear that her Majesty was desirous of assuming the sovereignty of the Provinces upon reasonable conditions, the States of Holland and of Zeeland would not be found backward in the business.⁴

Leicester proposed that Prince Maurice of Nassau should go with him to England, as nominal chief of the embassy, and some of the deputies favoured the suggestion. It was

¹ Wilkes to Leicester, &c., MS. just cited.
² Bor. II. 780-783.

³ Wagenaar, viii. 181.
⁴ Ibid.

however, vigorously and successfully opposed by Barneveld, who urged that to leave the country without a head in such a dangerous position of affairs, would be an act of madness.¹ Leicester was much annoyed when informed of this decision. He was suspected of a design, during his absence, of converting Maurice entirely to his own way of thinking. If unsuccessful, it was believed by the Advocate and by many others that the Earl would cause the young Prince to be detained in England as long as Philip William, his brother, had been kept in Spain. He observed peevishly that he knew how it had all been brought about.²

Words, of course, and handsome compliments were exchanged between the Governor and the States-General on his departure. He protested that he had never pursued any private ends during his administration, but had ever sought to promote the good of the country and the glory of the Queen, and that he had spent three hundred thousand florins of his own money in the brief period of his residence there.³

The Advocate, on part of the States, assured him that they were all aware that in the friendship of England lay their only chance of salvation, but that united action was the sole means by which that salvation could be effected, and the one which had enabled the late Prince of Orange to maintain a contest unequalled by anything recorded in history. There was also much disquisition on the subject of finance—the Advocate observing that the States now raised as much in a month as the Provinces in the time of the Emperor used to levy in a year—and expressed the hope that the Queen would increase her contingent to ten thousand foot, and two thousand horse. He repudiated, in the name of the States-General and his own, the possibility of peace-negotiations; deprecated any allusion to the subject as fatal to their religion, their liberty, their very existence, and equally disastrous to England and to Protestantism, and implored the Earl, therefore, to use all

¹ Bor, *ubi sup.* Hooffd, Vervolgh, |
206. Wagenaar, viii. 185.

² Bor, *ubi sup.*
³ Bor, II. 785. Hooffd, *ubi sup.*

his influence in opposition to any pacific overtures to or from Spain.¹

On the 24th November, acts were drawn up and signed by the Earl, according to which the supreme government of 24 Nov., the United Netherlands was formally committed to 1586. the state-council during his absence. Decrees were to be pronounced in the name of his Excellency, and counter-signed by Maurice of Nassau.

On the following day, Leicester, being somewhat indisposed, requested a deputation of the States-General to wait upon him in his own house. This was done, and a formal and affectionate farewell was then read to him by his secretary, Mr. Atye. It was responded to in complimentary fashion by Advocate Barneveld, who again took occasion at this parting interview to impress upon the governor the utter impossibility, in his own opinion and that of the other deputies, of reconciling the Provinces with Spain.²

Leicester received from the States—as a magnificent parting present—a silver gilt vase “as tall as a man,” and then departed for Flushing to take shipping for England.³

¹ Bor, Hoofd, Wagenaar, *ubi sup.* Reyd, v. 108, 109.

² Ibid. *Meteren*, xiii. 238.

³ Bor, II. 754. Reyd, Holl. 4 Oct. 9 Nov. 442, 493. Wagenaar, viii. 173.

The vase or cup (*kop*) as it was called, had cost 9000 florins. The

States pronounced it “as singular a jewel as could be found in any of the surrounding kingdoms.” It was said that on account of its size, it could only have been gilded at the peril of the artisan’s life. Van Wyn op Wages, viii. 62.

CHAPTER XII.

Ill-timed Interregnum in the Provinces—Firmness of the English and Dutch People—Factions during Leicester's Government—Democratic Theories of the Leicestrians—Suspensions as to the Earl's Designs—Extreme Views of the Calvinists—Political Ambition of the Church—Antagonism of the Church and States—The States inclined to Tolerance—Desolation of the Obedient Provinces—Pauperism and Famine—Prosperity of the Republic—The Year of Expectation.

It was not unnatural that the Queen should desire the presence of her favourite at that momentous epoch, when the dread question, "*aut fer aut feri*," had at last demanded its definite solution. It was inevitable, too, that Leicester should feel great anxiety to be upon the spot where the great tragedy, so full of fate to all Christendom, and in which his own fortunes were so closely involved, was to be enacted. But it was most cruel to the Netherlands—whose well-being was nearly as important to Elizabeth as that of her own realm—to plunge them into anarchy at such a moment. Yet this was the necessary result of the sudden retirement of Leicester.

He did not resign his government. He did not bind himself to return. The question of sovereignty was still unsettled, for it was still hoped by a large and influential party, that the English Queen would accept the proposed annexation. It was yet doubtful, whether, during the period of abeyance, the States-General or the States-Provincial, each within their separate sphere, were entitled to supreme authority. Meantime, as if here were not already sufficient elements of dissension and doubt, came a sudden and indefinite interregnum, a provisional, an abnormal, and an impotent government. To the state-council was deputed the executive authority. But the state-council was a creature of the States-General, acting in concert with the governor-general, and having no actual life of its own. It was a board of consultation, not of

decision, for it could neither enact its own decrees nor interpose a veto upon the decrees of the governor.

Certainly the selection of Leicester to fill so important a post had not been a very fortunate one ; and the enthusiasm which had greeted him, "as if he had been a Messiah," on his arrival, had very rapidly dwindled away, as his personal character became known. The leading politicians of the country had already been aware of the error which they had committed in clothing with almost sovereign powers the delegate of one who had refused the sovereignty. They were too adroit to neglect the opportunity, which her Majesty's anger offered them, of repairing what they considered their blunder. When at last the quarrel, which looked so much like a lovers' quarrel, between Elizabeth and 'Sweet Robin,' had been appeased to the satisfaction of Robin, his royal mistress became more angry with the States for circumscribing than she had before been for their exaggeration of his authority. Hence the implacable hatred of Leicester to Paul Buys and Barneveld.

Those two statesmen, for eloquence, learning, readiness, administrative faculty, surpassed by few who have ever wielded the destinies of free commonwealths, were fully equal to the task thrown upon their hands by the progress of events. That task was no slight one, for it was to the leading statesmen of Holland and England, sustained by the indomitable resistance to despotism almost universal in the English and Dutch nations, that the liberty of Europe was entrusted at that momentous epoch. Whether united under one crown, as the Netherlands ardently desired, or closely allied for aggression and defence, the two peoples were bound indissolubly together. The clouds were rolling up from the fatal south, blacker and more portentous than ever ; the artificial equilibrium of forces, by which the fate of France was kept in suspense, was obviously growing every day more uncertain ; but the prolonged and awful interval before the tempest should burst over the lands of freedom and Protestantism, gave at least time for the prudent to prepare. The Armada

was growing every day in the ports of Spain and Portugal, and Walsingham doubted, as little as did Buys or Barneveld, toward what shores that invasion was to be directed. England was to be conquered in order that the rebellious Netherlands might be reduced ; and ' Mucio ' was to be let slip upon the unhappy Henry III. so soon as it was thought probable that the Béarnese and the Valois had sufficiently exhausted each other. Philip was to reign in Paris, Amsterdam, London, and Edinburgh, without stirring from the Escorial. An excellent programme, had there not been some English gentlemen, some subtle secretaries of state, some Devonshire skippers, some Dutch advocates and merchants, some Zeeland fly-boatmen, and six million men, women, and children, on the two sides of the North Sea, who had the power of expressing their thoughts rather bluntly than otherwise in different dialects of old Anglo-Saxon speech.

Certainly it would be unjust and ungracious to disparage the heroism of the great Queen when the hour of danger really came, nor would it be legitimate for us, who can scan that momentous year of expectation, 1587, by the light of subsequent events and of secret contemporaneous record, to censure or even sharply to criticise the royal hankering for peace, when peace had really become impossible. But as we shall have occasion to examine rather closely the secrets of the Spanish, French, English, and Dutch councils, during this epoch, we are likely to find, perhaps, that at least as great a debt is due to the English and Dutch people, in mass, for the preservation of European liberty at that disastrous epoch as to any sovereign, general, or statesman.

For it was in the great waters of the sixteenth century that the nations whose eyes were open, discovered the fountain of perpetual youth, while others, who were blind, passed rapidly onward to decrepitude. England was, in many respects, a despotism so far as regarded governmental forms ; and no doubt the Catholics were treated with greater rigour than could be justified even by the perpetual and most dangerous machinations of the seminary priests and their instigators

against the throne and life of Elizabeth. The word liberty was never musical in Tudor ears, yet Englishmen had blunt tongues and sharp weapons which rarely rusted for want of use. In the presence of a parliament, and the absence of a standing army, a people accustomed to read the Bible in the vernacular, to handle great questions of religion and government freely, and to bear arms at will, was most formidable to despotism. There was an advance on the olden time. A Francis Drake, a John Hawkins, a Roger Williams, might have been sold, under the Plantagenets, like an ox or an ass. A 'female villain' in the reign of Henry III. could have been purchased for eighteen shillings—hardly the price of a fatted pig, and not one-third the value of an ambling palfrey—and a male villain, such an one as could in Elizabeth's reign circumnavigate the globe in his own ship, or take imperial field-marshal by the beard, was worth but two or three pounds sterling in the market. Here was progress in three centuries, for the villains were now become admirals and generals in England and Holland, and constituted the main stay of these two little commonwealths, while the commanders who governed the 'invincible' fleets and armies of omnipotent Spain, were all cousins of emperors, or grandees of bluest blood. Perhaps the system of the reformation would not prove the least effective in the impending crisis.

It was most important, then, that these two nations should be united in council, and should stand shoulder to shoulder as their great enemy advanced. But this was precisely what had been rendered almost impossible by the course of events during Leicester's year of administration, and by his sudden but not final retirement at its close. The two great national parties which had gradually been forming, had remained in a fluid state during the presence of the governor-general. During his absence they gradually hardened into the forms which they were destined to retain for centuries. In the history of civil liberty, these incessant contests, these oral and written disquisitions, these sharp concussions of opinion, and the still harder blows, which, unfortunately, were dealt on a

few occasions by the combatants upon each other, make the year 1587 a memorable one. The great questions of the origin of government, the balance of dynastic forces, the distribution of powers, were dealt with by the ablest heads, both Dutch and English, that could be employed in the service of the kingdom and republic. It was a war of protocols, arguments, orations, rejoinders, apostilles, and pamphlets, very wholesome for the cause of free institutions and the intellectual progress of mankind. The reader may perhaps be surprised to see with how much vigour and boldness the grave questions which underlie all polity, were handled so many years before the days of Russell and Sidney, of Montesquieu and Locke, Franklin, Jefferson, Rousseau, and Voltaire; and he may be even more astonished to find exceedingly democratic doctrines propounded, if not believed in, by trained statesmen of the Elizabethan school. He will be also apt to wonder that a more fitting time could not be found for such philosophical debate than the epoch at which both the kingdom and the republic were called upon to strain every sinew against the most formidable and aggressive despotism that the world had known since the fall of the Roman Empire.

The great dividing-line between the two parties, that of Leicester and that of Holland, which controlled the action of the States-General, was the question of sovereignty. After the declaration of independence and the repudiation of Philip, to whom did the sovereignty belong? To the people, said the Leicestrians. To the States-General and the States-Provincial, as legitimate representatives of the people, said the Holland party. Without looking for the moment more closely into this question, which we shall soon find ably discussed by the most acute reasoners of the time, it is only important at present to make a preliminary reflection. The Earl of Leicester, of all men in the world, would seem to have been precluded by his own action, and by the action of his Queen, from taking ground against the States. It was the States who, by solemn embassy, had offered the sovereignty to Elizabeth. She had not accepted the offer, but she had

deliberated on the subject, and certainly she had never expressed a doubt whether or not the offer had been legally made. By the States, too, that governor-generalship had been conferred upon the Earl, which had been so thankfully and eagerly accepted. It was strange, then, that he should deny the existence of the power whence his own authority was derived. If the States were not sovereigns of the Netherlands, he certainly was nothing. He was but general of a few thousand English troops.

The Leicester party, then, proclaimed extreme democratic principles as to the origin of government and the sovereignty of the people. They sought to strengthen and to make almost absolute the executive authority of their chief, on the ground that such was the popular will; and they denounced with great acrimony the insolence of the upstart members of the States, half a dozen traders, hired advocates, churls, tinkers, and the like—as Leicester was fond of designating the men who opposed him—in assuming these airs of sovereignty.¹

This might, perhaps, be philosophical doctrine, had its supporters not forgotten that there had never been any pretence at an expression of the national will, except through the mouths of the States. The States-General and the States-Provincial, without any usurpation, but as a matter of fact and of great political convenience, had, during fifteen years, exercised the authority which had fallen from Philip's hands. The people hitherto had acquiesced in their action, and cer-

¹ "They which have all authority in this State," said an honest German traveller, who happened to be in Arnheim that winter, "are for the most part merchants, orators of towns, mechanic men, ignorant, loving gain naturally, without respect of honour; . . . born to obey rather than command, who having once tasted the sweetness of authority, have by little and little persuaded themselves that they are sovereigns; insulting over the people, and controlling him to whom they had by oath referred the absolute and general government . . . Seeing that the sovereignty really belongs to the people, to whom they are

but servants and deputies . . . I see no other remedy for this mischief, but that the people be wary how they give such power and authority, and suffer it to continue so long in the hands of men of mechanic and base condition, who, grown proud with the command, abuse it daily, as well against the people as against the governors, to whom the people have referred the government both over themselves and over the whole estate." Raymond Stockeler to a friend in England, 15 Feb. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.) The letter is printed in Grimstone's 'Netherlands,' pp. 949, seq.

tainly there had not yet been any call for a popular convention, or any other device to ascertain the popular will. It was also difficult to imagine what was the exact entity of this abstraction called the "people" by men who expressed such extreme contempt for "merchants, advocates, town-orators, churls, tinkers, and base mechanic men, born not to command but to obey." Who were the people when the educated classes and the working classes were thus carefully eliminated? Hardly the simple peasantry—the boors—who tilled the soil. At that day the agricultural labourers less than all others dreamed of popular sovereignty, and more than all others submitted to the mild authority of the States. According to the theory of the Netherland constitutions, they were supposed—and they had themselves not yet discovered the fallacies to which such doctrines could lead—to be represented by the nobles and country-squires who maintained in the States of each Province the general farming interests of the republic. Moreover, the number of agricultural peasants was comparatively small. The lower classes were rather accustomed to plough the sea than the land, and their harvests were reaped from that element, which to Hollanders and Zeelanders was less capricious than the solid earth. Almost every inhabitant of those sea-born territories was, in one sense or another, a mariner; for every highway was a canal; the soil was percolated by rivers and estuaries, pools and meres; the fisheries were the nurseries in which still more daring navigators rapidly learned their trade, and every child took naturally to the ocean as to its legitimate home.

The "people," therefore, thus enthroned by the Leicestrians *over all the inhabitants* of the country, appeared to many eyes rather a misty abstraction, and its claim of absolute sovereignty a doctrine almost as fantastic as that of the divine right of kings. The Netherlanders were, on the whole, a law-abiding people, preferring to conduct even a revolution according to precedent, very much attached to ancient usages and traditions, valuing the liberties, as they called them, which

they had wrested from what had been superior force, with their own right hands, preferring facts to theories, and feeling competent to deal with tyrants in the concrete rather than to annihilate tyranny in the abstract by a bold and generalizing phraseology. Moreover the opponents of the Leicester party complained that the principal use to which this newly discovered "people" had been applied, was to confer its absolute sovereignty unconditionally upon one man. The people was to be sovereign in order that it might immediately abdicate in favour of the Earl.¹

Utrecht, the capital of the Leicestrians, had already been deprived of its constitution. The magistracy was, according to law, changed every year. A list of candidates was furnished by the retiring board, an equal number of names was added by the governor of the Province, and from the catalogue thus composed the governor with his council selected the new magistrates for the year. But De Villiers, the governor of the Province, had been made a prisoner by the enemy in the last campaign; Count Moeurs had been appointed provisional stadholder by the States; and, during his temporary absence on public affairs, the Leicestrians had seized upon the government, excluded all the ancient magistrates, banished many leading citizens

¹ Even Leicester himself was astonished at the subserviency of the democratic party. "I remember," said his confidential secretary, "that your Excellency told me once a *very wise word*—that those of Utrecht had given you more authority than they could well do."

"Your council," he said further, "cannot allow of all the doings of M. Deventer and of M. Modet. True it is that they both and all those of Utrecht do love you with all their hearts, but they do many things very rashly, and do disunite themselves from the generality of the United Provinces. Inasmuch that, at this present, those of the magistrates of Utrecht have disunited themselves from the States of their own Province, and work every day one against another. . . . I had written to you by

M. Modet and M. Rataller, but they both stole away secretly from hence, and surely this proceeding is not very well liked here of the best sort, as though he would have prevented the other party, and make his own reasons good first to your Excellency." Otheman to Leicester, 7 Jan. 1587. (Br. Mus. Galba, C. xi. p. 72, MS.)

"Cupimus ut sua Excellentia (Leicestrius) *absolūtē imperet*, et pro sua discretionē, salva religione et privilegiis suam Majestatem non offendentibus." So ran a petition, to which Deventer procured signatures among the Utrecht citizens, and then handed it to Leicester. "Such a government as that would be," says a Frisian contemporary, "was never seen in the Netherlands, and could hardly be found in Christendom." Reynd, v. 86.

from the town, and installed an entirely new board, with Gerard Proninck, called Deventer, for chief burgomaster, who was a Brabantine refugee just arrived in the Province, and not eligible to office until after ten years' residence.¹

It was not unnatural that the Netherlanders, who remembered the scenes of bloodshed and disorder produced by the memorable attempt of the Duke of Anjou to obtain possession of Antwerp and other cities, should be suspicious of Leicester. Anjou, too, had been called to the Provinces by the voluntary action of the States. He too had been hailed as a Messiah and a deliverer. In him too had unlimited confidence been reposed, and he had repaid their affection and their gratitude by a desperate attempt to obtain the control of their chief cities by the armed hand, and thus to constitute himself absolute sovereign of the Netherlands. The inhabitants had, after a bloody contest, averted the intended massacre and the impending tyranny ; but it was not astonishing that—so very few years having elapsed since those tragical events—they should be inclined to scan severely the actions of the man who had already obtained by unconstitutional means the mastery of a most important city, and was supposed to harbour designs upon all the cities.

No doubt it was a most illiberal and unwise policy for the inhabitants of the independent States to exclude from office the wanderers, for conscience' sake, from the obedient Provinces. They should have been welcomed heart and hand by those who were their brethren in religion and in the love of freedom. Moreover, it was notorious that Hohenlo, lieutenant-general under Maurice of Nassau, was a German, and that by the treaty with England, two foreigners sat in the state council, while the army swarmed with English, Irish, and German officers in high command. Nevertheless, violently to subvert the constitution of a Province, and to place in posts of high responsibility men who were ineligible—some whose characters were suspicious, and some who were known

¹ Bor, II. xxi. 722, 735. Reynd, v. 85, 86. Wagenaar, viii. 166, 168.

to be dangerous, and to banish large numbers of respectable burghers—was the act of a despot.¹

Besides their democratic doctrines, the Leicestrians proclaimed and encouraged an exclusive and rigid Calvinism.

It would certainly be unjust and futile to detract from the vast debt which the republic owed to the Geneva Church. The reformation had entered the Netherlands by the Walloon gate. The earliest and most eloquent preachers, the most impassioned converts, the sublimest martyrs, had lived, preached, fought, suffered, and died with the precepts of Calvin in their hearts. The fire which had consumed the last vestige of royal and sacerdotal despotism throughout the independent republic, had been lighted by the hands of Calvinists.

Throughout the blood-stained soil of France, too, the men who

¹ It was especially unfortunate that Leicester should fall so completely into the control of Deventer. That subtle politician filled the governor's mind full with spite against the States-General, inspiring him perpetually with jealousy of all bodies or individuals that interfered with his hopes of attaining arbitrary, perhaps sovereign power. "The States-General," Deventer whispered in Leicester's ear, "are becoming more presumptuous daily. They have dared to return our old members to the assembly whom we" (after the municipal revolution) "had recalled. They have released Paul Buys. We are all marvellously scandalized, for truly these States assume more jurisdiction than was ever done by the greatest tyrant that ever usurped in this land. You shall hear many particulars by an agent which it is best not to write Let her Majesty reflect that her's will be the shame, on her head descends the scorn, and ruin to her realm will be the result. Let her break up this conspiracy by a sudden and heroic resolution, let her send your Excellency hither, with plenty of money and soldiers, and we on our side will take care not to be dishonoured suddenly, while waiting for your return."

Such were the prudent counsels

given to Queen Elizabeth, by Leicester's chief adviser, in a moment full of darkness and difficulty. To seize by violence on the cities of the Provinces, to subvert their ancient constitutions, to enact, in short, all that had been done or attempted by former tyrants, was the object proposed to the English sovereign and the English governor. G. de Proninck to Leicester, 20 Jan. 1587. (Br. Mus., Galba C. xi. 95, MS.)

Otheman, too, boldly assured the Queen, in a letter addressed directly to her Majesty, that the "root of the whole evil in the Netherlands was the *ochlocracy* and bad government of the State," and that the reformation could only come from her. He was also of opinion that the country had been badly handled for a long time. "I believe, madam," he observed, "that this sick person has had so many diseases for twenty years and has had so many different doctors—some without experience and others without fidelity—that the more despairing the patient is of his own case, the more honour it will be to the one who cures him; and 'tis your Majesty alone who can now administer the remedy." Otheman to the Queen, 15 Feb. 1587. (Br. Mus., Galba C. xi. p. 263, MS.)

were fighting the same great battle as were the Netherlanders against Philip II. and the Inquisition, the valiant cavaliers of Dauphiny and Provence, knelt on the ground, before the battle, smote their iron breasts with their mailed hands, uttered a Calvinistic prayer, sang a psalm of Marot, and then charged upon Guise, or upon Joyeuse, under the white plume of the Bearnese. And it was on the Calvinist weavers and clothiers of Rochelle that the great Prince relied in the hour of danger as much as on his mountain chivalry. In England too, the seeds of liberty, wrapped up in Calvinism and hoarded through many trying years, were at last destined to float over land and sea, and to bear large harvests of temperate freedom for great commonwealths, which were still unborn. Nevertheless there was a growing aversion in many parts of the States for the rigid and intolerant spirit of the reformed religion. There were many men in Holland who had already imbibed the true lesson—the only one worth learning of the reformation—liberty of thought ; but toleration in the eyes of the extreme Calvinistic party was as great a vice as it could be in the estimation of Papists. To a favoured few of other habits of thought, it had come to be regarded as a virtue ; but the day was still far distant when men were to scorn the very word toleration as an insult to the dignity of man ; as if for any human being or set of human beings, in caste, class, synod, or church, the right could even in imagination be conceded of controlling the consciences of their fellow-creatures.

But it was progress for the sixteenth century that there were individuals, and prominent individuals, who dared to proclaim liberty of conscience for all. William of Orange was a Calvinist, sincere and rigid, but he denounced all oppression of religion, and opened wide the doors of the commonwealth to Papists, Lutherans, and Anabaptists alike. The Earl of Leicester was a Calvinist, most rigid in tenet, most edifying of conversation, the acknowledged head of the Puritan party of England, but he was intolerant and was influenced only by the most intolerant of his sect. Certainly

it would have required great magnanimity upon his part to assume a friendly demeanour towards the Papists. It is easier for us, in more favoured ages, to rise to the heights of philosophical abstraction, than for a man placed as was Leicester, in the front rank of a mighty battle, in which the triumph of either religion seemed to require the bodily annihilation of all its adversaries. He believed that the success of a Catholic conspiracy against the life of Elizabeth or of a Spanish invasion of England, would raise Mary to the throne and consign himself to the scaffold. He believed that the subjugation of the independent Netherlands would place the Spaniards instantly in England, and he frequently received information, true or false, of Popish plots that were ever hatching in various parts of the Provinces against the English Queen.¹ It was not surprising, therefore, although it was unwise, that he should incline his ear most seriously to those who counselled severe measures not only against Papists, but against those who were not persecutors of Papists, and that he should allow himself to be guided by adventurers, who wore the mask of religion only that they might plunder the exchequer and rob upon the highway.

Under the administration of this extreme party, therefore, the Papists were maltreated, disfranchised, banished, and plundered.² The distribution of the heavy war-taxes, more

¹ "May it please your sacred Majesty," wrote Wilkes, "there is come into my hands the copy of a letter written by the Prince of Parma to the Bishop of Liege, dated 24th of last month; by the which, among other things, doth appear, that there is yet some bloody purpose in hand to be executed upon your Majesty's sacred person, as by the same here inclosed doth appear It is signified by the letter, that, although the exterior of the treasons and practices plotted and contrived against your Majesty be discovered, yet the core and marrow thereof is not as yet uncovered or known, whereby your enemies doubt not but to achieve in time their wicked and horrible pur-

poses against you." Wilkes to the Queen, 17 Dec. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

It can hardly excite surprise that the Queen, receiving almost every week such intimations out of the Spanish Netherlands of attempts against her life, should desire to deal severely with seminary priests and their associates coming from those regions.

² Yet, strange to say, it was Lord Buckhurst's opinion that the opponents of the Catholic religion were but a small minority of the Dutch people. "For the commonwealth of these Provinces," wrote that envoy, "consisting of divers parts and professions, as, namely, Protestants, Puri-

than two-thirds of which were raised in Holland only, was confided to foreigners, and regulated mainly at Utrecht, where not one-tenth part of the same revenue was collected. This naturally excited the wrath of the merchants and manufacturers of Holland and the other Provinces, who liked not that these hard-earned and lavishly-paid subsidies should be meddled with by any but the cleanest hands.

The clergy, too, arrogated a direct influence in political affairs. Their demonstrations were opposed by the anti-Leicestrians, who cared not to see a Geneva theocracy in the place of the vanished Papacy. They had as little reverence in secular affairs for Calvinistic deacons as for the college of cardinals, and would as soon accept the infallibility of Sixtus V. as that of Herman Modet. The reformed clergy who had dispossessed and confiscated the property of the ancient ecclesiastics who once held a constitutional place in the Estates of Utrecht—although many of those individuals were now married and had embraced the reformed religion—who had demolished, and sold at public auction, for 12,300 florins,¹ the time-honoured cathedral where the earliest Christians of the Netherlands had worshipped, and St.

tans, Anabaptists, and Spanish hearts, which are no small number, it is most certain, that, dividing this in five parts, the Protestants and Puritans do hardly contain even one part of five; although, at this present, the Protestants and Puritans, by having the rule and sovereignty in their hands, do wholly wage and command the captains and soldiers." Buckhurst to the Queen, 27 May, 1587. Printed in 'Cabala, or Mysteries of State,' p. 37.

And again, in a letter to Walsingham, the same diplomatist remarks that the real object of the revolt of the Netherlanders was not to defend their religious but their civil freedom, and that Catholics and Protestants were all united to that end. "If her Majesty," he said, "should not only refuse the sovereignty, but not give sufficient aid, it is in a manner certain that the people, not being the fifth man a Protestant, and not making

their war in truth for religion, but for *their country and liberty* only, and to resist the tyranny of the Spaniards, whose hatred is ingraft in the hearts of them all, when they shall see her Majesty fail in their defence, will turn and revolt to the enemy," &c. &c. Ibid. p. 11, 13. 13 April, 1587.

These sweeping statements may not be strictly accurate, but there is no doubt that Buckhurst was struck by the general and growing feeling of mutual toleration among the adherents to the various forms of religion in Holland, and by the instinct which prompted the whole commonwealth to strike for civil and religious liberty in one. Compare Kluit, 'Holl. Staats-reg.' II. 360, who states expressly that the majority of every town and village in the Provinces were, in heart, faithful to the Roman Catholic religion.

¹ Bor, III. xxxiii. 108.

Willibrod had ministered, were roundly rebuked, on more than one occasion, by the blunt Hollanders for meddling with matters beyond their sphere.¹

¹ Bor, III. xxiii. 108.

"There is a controversy," wrote Wilkes, "within the town and province of Utrecht (their estate being compounded of the nobility, clergy, and towns, containing three several members) between the towns and the clergy, whom the towns have inhibited to appear any more in the public assemblies, meaning to censure them upon pretence that the clergy, their third member, is a hindrance to their good proceedings. The nobility taketh part with the clergy, and do not think it fit nor agreeable with order or justice that one third member, inferior to the other two, should take upon him to depose the first member, being the clergy, without the authority of the sovereign governor or the general assent of the Union. At the beginning of the garboille, it was thought fit by this council to depute the Count Moeurs, Mons. de Meetkerk, and Doctor Hottman, persons of judgment, to hear the controversy and as they were travelling to reduce them to an accord, there came a letter to the captains of the bourgeoisie of the town of Utrecht (being the principal movers of this dissension), written by Mr. Herle, by which they have taken heart to persist obstinately in their purpose, persuading themselves that their proceedings will be avowed by her Majesty. And albeit this letter do not directly touch the matter, yet the large promises he maketh in her Majesty's name of her absolute purpose to embrace their cause, 'avec la pleine main,' as he termeth it, hath been occasion that they have uttered in public speeches that the letters of her Majesty's ambassador Herle hath given them sufficient hope that her Majesty will not mislike of their doings in going about to banish Popery out of that Province, which they make to be a show and countenance of their dealings; but, as I am informed, the most part of those that are of this clergy, and do hold the ecclesiastical livings, are married and of the religion. And in truth, as far

as I can perceive, their quarrel is not against the persons of the ecclesiastics, because they are contented that the persons shall continue in their assemblies, but against the livings, which they mean to convert to some other uses. And although, for mine own poor opinion, I think the church-livings were most fitly to be converted to the defence of the public cause, yet the manner of the doing thereof should be speedily prevented, for all men of judgment here are of opinion that if it be not stayed, it will hazard the loss of the town, and consequently of the whole Province. I am informed that the magistrates of Utrecht have despatched towards my lord-general and her Majesty one Herman Modet, their chief minister, to acquaint them with the matter, and to make good their proceedings. The said Modet, by the report of M. de Villiers, the minister, and Saravia, a great learned preacher of Leyden, is taken to be the greatest mutyne in all these countries; and it is avouched by them and others of the best condition that he was the only occasion of the loss of Ghent, upon the like matter begun by him within the town. The Prince of Orange, in his time, could never brook the same Modet, and, as the Count Maurice telleth me, he did always oppose himself against the counsel and designs of the Prince his father. I thought it not unfit to give you this taste of the condition of Modet, because I know that my Lord North, Mr. Killigrew, and Mr. Webbe have greatly supported him in his humours at Utrecht, and it is not to be doubted that they will do the like at home." Wilkes to Walsingham, Dec. 24, 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

Such letters, written on the spot, by a man thoroughly acquainted with Netherland politics, and the experienced faithful representative of her Majesty in the state-council, explain the intrigues and the instruments of the Leicesterian party. It was by honest and lucid expositions like these, that the writer incurred the

The party of the States-General, as opposed to the Leicester party, was guided by the statesmen of Holland. At a somewhat later period was formed the States-right party, which claimed sovereignty for each Province, and by necessary consequence the hegemony throughout the confederacy, for Holland. At present the doctrine maintained was that the sovereignty forfeited by Philip had naturally devolved upon the States-General. The statesmen of this party repudiated the calumny that it had therefore lapsed into the hands of half a dozen mechanics and men of low degree. The States of each Province were, they maintained, composed of nobles and country-gentlemen, as representing the agricultural interest, and of deputies from the 'vroedschappen,' or municipal governments, of every city and smallest town.

Such men as Adrian Van der Werff, the heroic burgo-master of Leyden during its famous siege, John Van der Does, statesman, orator, soldier, poet, Adolphus Meetkerke, judge, financier, politician, Carl Roorda, Noel de Caron, diplomatist of most signal ability, Floris Thin, Paul Buys, and Olden-Barneveld, with many others, who would have done honour to the legislative assemblies and national councils in any country or any age, were constantly returned as members of the different vroedschaps in the commonwealth.

So far from its being true then that half a dozen ignorant mechanics had usurped the sovereignty of the Provinces, after the abjuration of the Spanish King, it may be asserted in general terms, that of the eight hundred thousand inhabitants of Holland at least eight hundred persons were always engaged in the administration of public affairs, that these individuals were perpetually exchanged for others, and that those whose names became most prominent in the politics of the day were remarkable for thorough education, high talents, and eloquence with tongue and pen.¹ It was acknowledged by the leading statesmen of England and France, on repeated

deadly hatred of the Earl, and was in danger of losing his life. (Compare Bor and Reyd, *ubi sup.* Le Petit, II.

xiv. 533. Wagenaar, viii. 168.)

¹ Kluit, 'Holl. Staatsregering,' II. 203.

occasions throughout the sixteenth century, that the diplomatists and statesmen of the Netherlands were even more than a match for any politicians who were destined to encounter them, and the profound respect which Leicester expressed for these solid statesmen, these "substantial, wise, well-linguaged" men, these "big fellows," so soon as he came in contact with them, and before he began to hate them for outwitting him, has already appeared. They were generally men of the people, born without any of the accidents of fortune; but the leaders had studied in the common schools, and later in the noble universities of a land where to be learned and eloquent was fast becoming almost as great an honour as to be wealthy or high born.

The executive, the legislative, and the judiciary departments were more carefully and scientifically separated than could perhaps have been expected in that age. The lesser municipal courts, in which city-senators presided, were subordinate to the supreme court of Holland, whose officers were appointed by the stadholders and council; the supplies were in the hands of the States-Provincial, and the supreme administrative authority was confided to a stadholder appointed by the States.

The States-General were constituted of similar materials to those of which the States-Provincial were constructed, and the same individuals were generally prominent in both. They were deputies appointed by the Provincial Estates, were in truth rather more like diplomatic envoys than senators, were generally bound very strictly by instructions, and were often obliged, by the jealousy springing from the States-right principle, to refer to their constituents, on questions when the times demanded a sudden decision, and when the necessary delay was inconvenient and dangerous.

In religious matters, the States-party, to their honour, already leaned to a wide toleration. Not only Catholics were not burned, but they were not banished, and very large numbers remained in the territory, and were quite undisturbed in religious matters, within their own doors. There were

even men employed in public affairs who were suspected of papistical tendencies, although their hostility to Spain and their attachment to their native land could not fairly be disputed. The leaders of the States-party had a rooted aversion to any political influence on the part of the clergy of any denomination whatever. Disposed to be lenient to all forms of worship, they were disinclined to an established church, but still more opposed to allowing church-influence in secular affairs. As a matter of course, political men with such bold views in religious matters were bitterly assailed by their rigid opponents. Barneveld, with his "nil scire tutissima fides," was denounced as a disguised Catholic or an infidel, and as for Paul Buys, he was a "bolsterer of Papists, an atheist, a devil," as it has long since been made manifest.

Nevertheless these men believed that they understood the spirit of their country and of the age. In encouragement to an expanding commerce, the elevation and education of the masses, the toleration of all creeds, and a wide distribution of political functions and rights, they looked for the salvation of their nascent republic from destruction, and the maintenance of the true interests of the people. They were still loyal to Queen Elizabeth, and desirous that she should accept the sovereignty of the Provinces. But they were determined that the sovereignty should be a constitutional one, founded upon and limited by the time-honoured laws and traditions of their commonwealth; for they recognised the value of a free republic with an hereditary chief, however anomalous it might in theory appear. They knew that in Utrecht the Leicestrian party were about to offer the Queen the sovereignty of their Province, *without conditions*, but they were determined that neither Queen Elizabeth nor any other monarch should ever reign in the Netherlands, *except* under conditions to be very accurately defined and well secured.

Thus contrasted, then, were the two great parties in the Netherlands, at the conclusion of Leicester's first year of administration. It may easily be understood that it was not an auspicious moment to leave the country without a chief.

The strength of the States-party lay in Holland, Zeeland, Friesland. The main stay of the democratic or Leicester faction was in the city of Utrecht, but the Earl had many partizans in Gelderland, Friesland, and in Overijssel, the capital of which Province, the wealthy and thriving Deventer, second only in the republic to Amsterdam for commercial and political importance, had been but recently secured for the Provinces by the vigorous measures of Sir William Pelham.

The condition of the republic and of the Spanish Provinces was, at that moment, most signally contrasted. If the effects of despotism and of liberty could ever be exhibited at a single glance, it was certainly only necessary to look for a moment at the picture of the obedient and of the rebel Netherlands.

Since the fall of Antwerp, the desolation of Brabant, Flanders, and of the Walloon territories had become complete. The King had recovered the great commercial capital, but its commerce was gone. The Scheldt, which, till recently, had been the chief mercantile river in the world, had become as barren as if its fountains had suddenly dried up. It was as if it no longer flowed to the ocean, for its mouth was controlled by Flushing. Thus Antwerp was imprisoned and paralyzed. Its docks and basins, where 2500 ships had once been counted, were empty, grass was growing in its streets, its industrious population had vanished, and the Jesuits had returned in swarms. And the same spectacle was presented by Ghent, Bruges, Valenciennes, Tournay, and those other fair cities, which had once been types of vigorous industry and tumultuous life. The sea-coast was in the hands of two rising commercial powers, the great and free commonwealths of the future. Those powers were acting in concert, and commanding the traffic of the world, while the obedient Provinces were excluded from all foreign intercourse and all markets, as the result of their obedience. Commerce, manufactures, agriculture, were dying lingering deaths. The thrifty farms, orchards, and gardens,

which had been a proverb and wonder of industry were becoming wildernesses. The demand for their produce by the opulent and thriving cities, which had been the workshops of the world, was gone. Foraging bands of Spanish and Italian mercenaries had succeeded to the famous tramp of the artizans and mechanics, which had often been likened to an army, but these new customers were less profitable to the gardeners and farmers. The clothiers, the fullers, the tapestry-workers, the weavers, the cutlers, had all wandered away, and the cities of Holland, Friesland, and of England, were growing skilful and rich by the lessons and the industry of the exiles to whom they afforded a home. There were villages and small towns in the Spanish Netherlands that had been literally depopulated. Large districts of country had gone to waste, and cane-brakes and squalid morasses usurped the place of yellow harvest-fields. The fox, the wild boar, and the wolf, infested the abandoned homes of the peasantry; children could not walk in safety in the neighbourhood even of the larger cities; wolves littered their young in the deserted farm-houses; two hundred persons, in the winter of 1586-7, were devoured by wild beasts in the outskirts of Ghent.¹ Such of the remaining labourers and artizans as had not been converted into soldiers, found their most profitable employment as brigands, so that the portion of the population spared by war and emigration was assisting the enemy in preying upon their native country. Brandschätzung, burglary, highway-robbery, and murder, had become the chief branches of industry among the working classes. Nobles and wealthy burghers had been changed to paupers and mendicants. Many a family of ancient lineage, and once of large possessions, could be seen begging their bread, at the dusk of evening, in the streets of great cities, where they had once exercised luxurious hospitality; and they often begged in vain.²

¹ Bor, II. xxii. 984, 985. Meteren, xiv. 253. Hoofd, Vervolgh, 251. Wagenaar, viii. 224, 225. Van Wyn op Wagen, viii. 67.

"The bedsteads of the abandoned cottages," says Meteren, "swarmed with little wolves," *ubi sup.*

² Bor, Meteren, Hoofd, Wagenaar.

For while such was the forlorn aspect of the country—and the portrait, faithfully sketched from many contemporary pictures, has not been exaggerated in any of its dark details—a great famine smote the land with its additional scourge. The whole population, soldiers and brigands, Spaniards and Flemings, beggars and workmen, were in danger of perishing together. Where the want of employment had been so great as to cause a rapid depopulation, where the demand for labour had almost entirely ceased, it was a necessary result, that during the process, prices should be low, even in the presence of foreign soldiery, and despite the inflated profits, which such capitalists as remained required, by way not only of profit but insurance, in such troublous times. Accordingly, for the last year or two, the price of rye at Antwerp and Brussels had been one florin for the veertel (three bushels) of one hundred and twenty pounds; that of wheat, about one-third of a florin more. Five pounds of rye, therefore, were worth one penny sterling, reckoning, as was then usual, two shillings to the florin. A pound weight of wheat was worth about one farthing.¹ Yet this was forty-one years after the discovery of the mines of Potosi (A.D. 1545), and full sixteen years after the epoch, from which is dated that rapid fall in the value of silver, which in the course of seventy years, caused the average price of corn and of all other commodities, to be tripled or even quadrupled. At that very moment the average cost of wheat in England was sixty-four shillings the quarter, or about seven and sixpence sterling the bushel,² and in the markets of Holland, which in

¹ A contemporary chronicler has preserved a droll medley of prices in the Netherlands in the year 1548, but one which, if accurate, furnishes a striking instance of the low money-valuation of the various necessities of life, before the great revolution in the value of silver had begun. For one hundred and sixty florins (16l.) there were bought a last (108 bushels, or 80 bushels English) of wheat, a last of rye, a last of barley, a last of oats, a

quarter hundred-weight of butter, 300 pounds of lard, one hundred cheeses, a doublet, a pair of shoes, a bonnet, a bag, a barrel of excellent beer, and there were six stuyvers over for drink-money. "And let this serve as a memorial," he piously observes, "of how much the wrath of God and how much his benignity can do for us." Met. xiv. 253.

² Tables in McCulloch's edition of Adam Smith, p. 117.

truth regulated all others, the same prices prevailed.¹ A bushel of wheat in England was equal therefore to eight bushels in Brussels.

Thus the silver mines, which were the Spanish King's property, had produced their effect everywhere more signally than within the obedient Provinces. The South American specie found its way to Philip's coffers, thence to the paymasters of his troops in Flanders, and thence to the commercial centres of Holland and England. Those countries, first to feel and obey the favourable expanding impulse of the age, were moving surely and steadily on before it to greatness. Prices were rising with unexampled rapidity, the precious metals were comparatively a drug, a world-wide commerce, such as had never been dreamed of, had become an every-day concern, the arts and sciences and a most generous culture in famous schools and universities, which had been founded in the midst of tumult and bloodshed, characterized the republic, and the golden age of English poetry, which was to make the Elizabethan era famous through all time, had already begun.

In the Spanish Netherlands the newly-found treasure served to pay the only labourers required in a subjugated and almost deserted country, the pikemen of Spain and Italy, and the reiters of Germany. Prices could not sustain themselves in the face of depopulation. Where there was no security for property, no home-market, no foreign intercourse, industrial pursuits had become almost impossible. The small demand for labour had caused it, as it were, to disappear altogether. All men had become beggars, brigands, or soldiers. A temporary reaction followed. There were no producers. Suddenly it was discovered that no corn had been planted, and that there was no harvest. A famine was the inevitable

¹ Bor, Meteren. A veertel is about three bushels. A florin was then always reckoned at two shillings sterling. The price of a bushel of rye at Brussels and Antwerp was therefore eightpence; that of a bushel of

wheat about one-third more, say elevenpence, or seven and fourpence for the quarter (eight bushels), about an eighth or ninth of the price in England and Holland.

result. Prices then rose with most frightful rapidity. The veertel of rye, which in the previous year had been worth one florin at Brussels and Antwerp, rose in the winter of 1586-7 to twenty, twenty-two, and even twenty-four florins; and wheat advanced from one and one-third florin to thirty-two florins the veertel.¹ Other articles were proportionally increased in market-value; but it is worthy of remark that mutton was quoted in the midst of the famine at nine stuyvers (a little more than ninepence sterling) the pound, and beef at fivepence, while a single cod-fish sold for twenty-two florins.² Thus wheat was worth sixpence sterling the pound weight (reckoning the veertel of one hundred and twenty pounds at thirty florins), which was a penny more than the price of a pound of beef; while an ordinary fish was equal in value to one hundred and six pounds of beef. No better evidence could be given that the obedient Provinces were relapsing into barbarism, than that the only agricultural industry then practised was to allow what flocks and herds were remaining to graze at will over the ruined farms and gardens, and that their fishermen were excluded from the sea.

The evil cured itself, however, and, before the expiration of another year, prices were again at their previous level. The land was sufficiently cultivated to furnish the necessities of life for a diminishing population, and the supply of labour was more than enough for the languishing demand. Wheat was again at tenpence the bushel, and other commodities valued in like proportion, and far below the market-prices in Holland and England.

On the other hand, the prosperity of the republic was rapidly increasing. Notwithstanding the war, which had been raging for a terrible quarter of a century without any interruption, population was increasing, property rapidly

¹ Bor, Meteren, Hooff, *ubi sup.* A last of rye is quoted by Meteren (xiv. 253^{vo}) at 800 florins. A last is equal to 80 bushels, English measure. This is just ten florins, or one pound sterling,

the bushel for rye, and one-third more, or twenty-seven shillings—that is to say, 10l. 16s. the quarter—for wheat.

² Bor, Hooff, Meteren, *ubi sup.*

³ *Ibid.*

advancing in value, labour in active demand. Famine was impossible to a state which commanded the ocean. No corn grew in Holland and Zeeland, but their ports were the granary of the world. The fisheries were a mine of wealth almost equal to the famous Potosi, with which the commercial world was then ringing. Their commerce with the Baltic nations was enormous. In one month eight hundred vessels left their havens for the eastern ports alone. There was also no doubt whatever—and the circumstance was a source of constant complaint and of frequent ineffective legislation—that the rebellious Provinces were driving a most profitable trade with Spain and the Spanish possessions, in spite of their revolutionary war. The mines of Peru and Mexico were as fertile for the Hollanders and Zeelanders as for the Spaniards themselves. The war paid for the war, one hundred large frigates were constantly cruising along the coasts to protect the fast-growing traffic, and an army of twenty thousand foot-soldiers and two thousand cavalry were maintained on land. There were more ships and sailors at that moment in Holland and Zeeland than in the whole kingdom of England.¹

While the sea-ports were thus rapidly increasing in importance, the towns in the interior were advancing as steadily. The woollen manufacture, the tapestry, the embroideries of Gelderland, and Friesland, and Overijssel, were becoming as famous as had been those of Tournay, Ypres, Brussels, and Valenciennes. The emigration from the obedient Provinces and from other countries was very great. It was difficult to obtain lodgings in the principal cities; new houses, new streets, new towns, were rising every day. The single Province of Holland furnished regularly, for war-expenses alone, two millions of florins (two hundred thousand pounds) a year, besides frequent extraordinary grants for the

¹ Six years later it was asserted by the magistrates of Amsterdam, in a communication made to the States-General, "that no one could doubt that in regard to the mercantile marine and the amount of tonnage, the Provinces were so far superior to England

that hardly any comparison could be made on the subject, &c. Koop vaardyschepen in Nederland a° 1593. Brief v. d. Burgemaasteren en Raden der stad Amsterdam aan de Staaten-General." (Hague Archives, MS.)

same purpose, yet the burthen imposed upon the vigorous young commonwealth seemed only to make it the more elastic. "The coming generations may see," says a contemporary historian, "the fortifications erected at that epoch in the cities, the costly and magnificent havens, the docks, the great extension of the cities ; for truly *the war had become a great benediction* to the inhabitants."¹

Such a prosperous commonwealth as this was not a prize to be lightly thrown away. There is no doubt whatever that a large majority of the inhabitants, and of the States by whom the people were represented, ardently and affectionately desired to be annexed to the English crown. Leicester had become unpopular, but Elizabeth was adored, and there was nothing unreasonable in the desire entertained by the Provinces of retaining their ancient constitutions, and of transferring their allegiance to the English Queen.

But the English Queen could not resolve to take the step. Although the great tragedy which was swiftly approaching its inevitable catastrophe, the execution of the Scottish Queen, was to make peace with Philip impossible—even if it were imaginable before—Elizabeth, during the year 1587, was earnestly bent on peace. This will be made manifest in subsequent pages, by an examination of the secret correspondence of the court. Her most sagacious statesmen disapproved her course, opposed it, and were often overruled, although never convinced ; for her imperious will would have its way.

The States-General loathed the very name of peace with Spain. The people loathed it. All knew that peace with Spain meant the exchange of a thriving prosperous commonwealth, with freedom of religion, constitutional liberty, and self-government, for provincial subjection to the inquisition and to despotism. To dream of any concession from Philip on the religious point was ridiculous. There was a mirror ever held up before their eyes by the obedient Provinces, in which they might see their own image, should they too return to obedience. And there was never a pretence, on the

¹ Meteren, xiv. 253^{re}.

part of any honest adviser of Queen Elizabeth in the Netherlands, whether Englishman or Hollander, that the idea of peace-negotiation could be tolerated for a moment by States or people. Yet the sum of the Queen's policy, for the year 1587, may be summed up in one word—peace ; peace for the Provinces, peace for herself, with their implacable enemy.

In France, during the same year of expectation, we shall see the long prologue to the tragic and memorable 1588 slowly enacting ; the same triangular contest between the three Henrys and their partizans still proceeding. We shall see the misguided and wretched Valois lamenting over his victories, and rejoicing over his defeats ; forced into hollow alliance with his deadly enemy ; arrayed in arms against his only protector and the true champion of the realm ; and struggling vainly in the toils of his own mother and his own secretary of state, leagued with his most powerful foes. We shall see 'Mucio,' with one hand extended in mock friendship toward the King, and with the other thrust backward to grasp the purse of 300,000 crowns held forth to aid his fellow-conspirator's dark designs against their common victim ; and the Béarnese, ever with lance in rest, victorious over the wrong antagonist, foiled of the fruits of victory, proclaiming himself the English Queen's devoted knight, but railing at her parsimony ; always in the saddle, always triumphant, always a beggar, always in love, always cheerful, and always confident to outwit the Guises and Philip, Parma and the Pope.

And in Spain we shall have occasion to look over the King's shoulder, as he sits at his study-table, in his most sacred retirement ; and we shall find his policy for the year 1587 summed up in two words—invasion of England. Sincerely and ardently as Elizabeth meant peace with Philip, just so sincerely did Philip intend war with England, and the dethronement and destruction of the Queen. To this great design all others were now subservient, and it was mainly on account of this determination that there was sufficient leisure in the republic for the Leicestrians and the States-General to fight out so thoroughly their party-contests.

CHAPTER XIII.

Barneveld's Influence in the Provinces—Unpopularity of Leicester—Intrigues of his Servants—Gossip of his Secretary—Its mischievous Effects—The Quarrel of Norris and Hollock—The Earl's Participation in the Affair—His increased Animosity to Norris—Seizure of Deventer—Stanley appointed its Governor—York and Stanley—Leicester's secret Instructions—Wilkes remonstrates with Stanley—Stanley's Insolence and Equivocation—Painful Rumours as to him and York—Duplicity of York—Stanley's Banquet at Deventer—He surrenders the City to Tassis—Terms of the Bargain—Feeble Defence of Stanley's Conduct—Subsequent Fate of Stanley and York—Betrayal of Gelder to Parma—These Treasons cast Odium on the English—Miserable Plight of the English Troops—Honesty and Energy of Wilkes—Indignant Discussion in the Assembly.

THE government had not been laid down by Leicester on his departure. It had been provisionally delegated, as already mentioned to the state-council. In this body—consisting of eighteen persons—originally appointed by the Earl, on nomination by the States, several members were friendly to the governor, and others were violently opposed to him. The States of Holland, by whom the action of the States-General was mainly controlled, were influenced in their action by Buys and Barneveld. Young Maurice of Nassau, nineteen years of age, was stadholder of Holland and Zeeland. A florid complexioned, fair-haired young man, of sanguine-bilious temperament; reserved, quiet, reflective, singularly self-possessed; meriting at that time, more than his father had ever done, the appellation of the taciturn; discreet, sober, studious. "Count Maurice saith but little, but I cannot tell what he thinketh," wrote Leicester's eaves-dropper-in-chief.¹ Mathematics, fortification, the science of war—these were his daily pursuits. "The sapling was to become the tree," and meantime the youth was preparing for the great destiny which he felt, lay before him. To ponder over the works and the daring conceptions of Stevinus, to build up and to batter the wooden blocks of mimic citadels; to arrange in countless

¹ Otheman to Leicester. (Brit. Mus. Galba, C. xi. 216, 1 Feb. 1587, MS.)

combinations, great armies of pewter soldiers ; these were the occupations of his leisure-hours. Yet he was hardly suspected of bearing within him the germs of the great military commander. "Small desire hath Count Maurice to follow the wars," said one who fancied himself an acute observer at exactly this epoch. "And whereas it might be supposed that in respect to his birth and place, he would affect the chief military command in these countries, it is *found by experience had of his humour, that there is no chance of his entering into competition* with the others."¹ A modest young man, who could bide his time—but who, meanwhile, under the guidance of his elders, was doing his best, both in field and cabinet, to learn the great lessons of the age—he had already enjoyed much solid practical instruction, under such a desperate fighter as Hohenlo, and under so profound a statesman as Barneveld. For at this epoch Olden-Barneveld was the preceptor, almost the political patron of Maurice, and Maurice, the official head of the Holland party, was the declared opponent of the democratic-Calvinist organization. It is not necessary, at this early moment, to foreshadow the changes which time was to bring. Meantime it would be seen, perhaps ere long, whether or no, it would be his humour to follow the wars. As to his prudent and dignified deportment there was little doubt. "Count Maurice behaveth himself very discreetly all this while," wrote one, who did not love him, to Leicester, who loved him less : "He cometh every day to the council, keeping no company with Count Hollock, nor with any of them all, and never drinks himself full with any of them, as they do every day among themselves."²

Certainly the most profitable intercourse that Maurice could enjoy with Hohenlo was upon the battle-field. In winter-quarters, that hard-fighting, hard-drinking, and most turbulent chieftain, was not the best Mentor for a youth whose destiny pointed him out as the leader of a free commonwealth. After the campaigns were over—if they ever

¹ Project for the Government of the
Provinces. ('Cabala,' p. 23.)

² Otheman to Leicester, 16 Jan.
1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, C. xi. 99, MS.)

could be over—the Count and other nobles from the same country were too apt to indulge in those mighty potations, which were rather characteristic of their nation and the age.

“Since your Excellency’s departure,” wrote Leicester’s secretary, “there hath been among the Dutch Counts nothing but dancing and drinking, to the grief of all this people, which foresee that there can come no good of it. Specially Count Hollock, who hath been drunk almost a fortnight together.”¹

Leicester had rendered himself unpopular with the States-General, and with all the leading politicians and generals; yet, at that moment, he had deeply mortgaged his English estates in order to raise funds to expend in the Netherland cause. Thirty thousand pounds sterling—according to his own statement—he was already out of pocket, and, unless the Queen would advance him the means to redeem his property, his broad lands were to be brought to the hammer.² But it was the Queen, not the States-General, who owed the money; for the Earl had advanced these sums as a portion of the royal contingent. Five hundred and sixty thousand pounds sterling had been the cost of one year’s war during the English governor’s administration; and of this sum one hundred and forty thousand had been paid by England.³ There was a portion of the sum, over and above their monthly levies, for which the States had contracted a debt, and they were extremely desirous to obtain, at that moment, an additional loan of fifty thousand pounds from Elizabeth; a favour which Elizabeth was very firmly determined not to grant. It was this terror at the expense into which the Netherland war was plunging her, which made the English sovereign so desirous for peace, and filled the anxious mind of Walsingham with the most painful forebodings.

¹ Otheman to Leicester, 7 Jan. 1587. (Ibid. p. 72, MS.)

² “List of the Earl of Leicester’s mortgages, to raise money spent in doing her Majesty service in the Low Countries.” (S. P. Office, 1587, MS.)

There were five different mortgages of estates and manors in England, amounting in all to 18,000*l*. “All the

mortgages above written are past redemption, except on present payment of the due debts. His Lordship doth owe an infinite sum besides for his expenses made in these services, over and besides these debts.”

³ Wilkes to Walsingham, 12 Jan. 1587. Same to Burghley, 12 Jan. 1587. (S. P. Office MSS.)

Leicester, in spite of his good qualities—such as they were—had not that most necessary gift for a man in his position, the art of making friends. No man made so many enemies. He was an excellent hater, and few men have been more cordially hated in return. He was imperious, insolent, hot-tempered. He could brook no equal. He had also the fatal defect of enjoying the flattery of his inferiors in station. Adroit intriguers burned incense to him as a god, and employed him as their tool. And now he had mortally offended Hohenlo, and Buys, and Barneveld, while he hated Sir John Norris with a most passionate hatred. Wilkes, the English representative, was already a special object of his aversion. The unvarnished statements made by the stiff counsellor, of the expense of the past year's administration, and the various errors committed, had inspired Leicester with such ferocious resentment, that the friends of Wilkes trembled for his life.¹

¹ "It is generally bruited here," wrote Henry Smith to his brother-in-law Wilkes, "of a most heavy displeasure conceived by my Lord of Leicester against you, and it is said to be so great as that he hath protested to be revenged of you; and to procure you the more enemies, it is said he hath revealed to my Lord Treasurer, and Secretary Davison some injurious speeches (which I cannot report) you should have used of them to him at your last being with him. Furthermore some of the said Lord's secretaries have reported here that it were good for you never to return hither, or, if their Lord be appointed to go over again, it will be too hot for you to tarry there. These things thus coming to the ears of your friends have stricken a great fear and grief into the minds of such as love you, lest the wonderful force and authority of this man being bent against you, should do you hurt, while there is none to answer for you." Smith to Wilkes, 26 Jan. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

Wilkes immediately wrote to Lord Burghley, indignantly denying that he had ever spoken disrespectfully or injuriously of him, as thus meanly reported of him by Leicester.

"I do briefly assure your Lordship,"

he said, "which I will avow with mine oath upon the Holy Testament, that I am therein as falsely and injuriously abused as ever was poor man, and, upon that protestation, I utterly deny that ever I advised my Lord to beware of your Lordship, or of any counsellor at your devotion, or that I ever used unto him, or to any creature living, any vile, uncivil, lewd, or undutiful term of your Lordship. I trust in the observation you have made of my conversation, serving her Majesty a dozen years under your wing, did never see that I was so indiscreet as to speak irreverently of men of your Lordship's place, and I hope you have not found me so foolish as by such lightness to draw myself into the hatred of so great personages, to overthrow myself wilfully. I thank God I was never so mad, and I might speak it without vaunt, that there was no man in court of my sort that had more good-will of high and low than myself, before the acceptance of this cursed and unfortunate journey, which, as I declared to your Lordship at the beginning, will be, I fear, the cause of my ruin; and then it pleased you to give me this advice, that I should serve her Majesty truly, and refer the rest to God. Your Lordship doth know the

Cordiality between the governor-general and Count Maurice had become impossible. As for Willoughby and Sir William Pelham, they were both friendly to him, but Willoughby was a magnificent cavalry officer, who detested politics, and cared little for the Netherlands, except as the best battle-field in Europe, and the old marshal of the camp—the only man that Leicester ever loved—was growing feeble in health, was broken down by debt, and hardly possessed, or wished for, any general influence.

Besides Deventer of Utrecht, then, on whom the Earl chiefly relied during his absence, there were none to support him cordially, except two or three members of the state-council. "Madame de Brederode hath sent unto you a kind of rose," said his intelligencer, "which you have asked for, and beseeches you to command anything she has in her garden, or whatsoever. M. Meetkerke, M. Brederode, and Mr. Dorius, wish your return with all their hearts. For the rest I cannot tell, and will not swear. But Mr. Barneveld is not your very great friend, whereof I can write no more at this time."¹

This certainly was a small proportion out of a council of eighteen, when all the leading politicians of the country were in avowed hostility to the governor. And thus the Earl was, at this most important crisis, to depend upon the subtle and dangerous Deventer, and upon two inferior personages, the "fellow Junius"² and a non-descript, whom Hohenlo cha-

humours and disposition of my great adversary better than I, and can judge thereof accordingly, which, with silence, I will leave to plead for me in your grave conceipt, together with the unlikelihood that I, having no cause of offense and finding you my good Lord, and that I am not mad, or used to precipitate myself in that manner, should in any probability be so great an enemy to myself as to make your Lordship my foe by any such levity. . . . Your Lordship hath herein dealt with me according to yourself, that you have not directly condemned me before you heard me. . . . If my ad-

versary were as mean in quality as myself, I would not doubt but by God's grace and help, to make mine innocency appear upon him with my hand." Wilkes to Burghley, 17 Feb. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

Thus it appears that the Lord Treasurer's conduct towards the Counsellor, who had been taking his advice of "serving her Majesty truly and referring the rest to God," was as honourable as that of Leicester was base.

¹ Otheman to Leicester, 16 Jan. 1587. (MS. already cited.)

² Common expression of Hohenlo (Bor, III. xxiii. 28.)

racterized as a "long lean Englishman, with a little black beard."¹ This meagre individual however seems to have been of somewhat doubtful nationality. He called himself Otheman, claimed to be a Frenchman, had lived much in England, wrote with great fluency and spirit, both in French and English, but was said, in reality, to be named Robert Dale.²

It was not the best policy for the representative of the English Queen to trust to such counsellors at a moment when the elements of strife between Holland and England were actively at work; and when the safety, almost the existence, of the two commonwealths depended upon their acting cordially in concert. "Overysse, Utrecht, Friesland, and Gelderland, have agreed to renew the offer of sovereignty to her Majesty," said Leicester. "I shall be able to make a better report of their love and good inclination than I can of Holland."³ It was thought very desirable by the English government that this great demonstration should be made once more, whatever might be the ultimate decision of her Majesty upon so momentous a measure. It seemed proper that a solemn embassy should once more proceed to England in order to confer with Elizabeth; but there was much delay in regard to the step, and much indignation, in consequence, on the part of the Earl. The opposition came, of course, from the Barneveld party. "They are in no great haste to offer the sovereignty," said Wilkes. "First some towns of Holland made bones thereat, and now they say that Zeeland is not resolved."⁴

The nature and the causes of the opposition offered by

¹ Bor, III., MS. last cited.

² Fowler to Burghley, 7 Oct. 1589, in Murdin's State Papers, p. 639.

³ Speech of Leicester to the deputies of States-General, just before his departure, Nov. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

"The town of Utrecht," said Wilkes a few weeks later, "doth dissent from the rest of the provinces in the manner of their sovereignty, who seeming to be best affected to her Majesty, do mean to yield her the same as Charles

V. did hold it, reserving only their principal privileges and religion, which the rest do not intend to do, as I can learn, who do purpose to charge the same with *many strange conditions*. I would be glad to know your honour's opinion of her Majesty's purpose therein, whereby I may better direct my services here." Wilkes to Walsingham, 19 Jan. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Wilkes to Leicester, 24 Dec. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

Barneveld and the States of Holland have been sufficiently explained. Buys, maddened by his long and unjustifiable imprisonment, had just been released by the express desire of Hohenlo ; and that unruly chieftain, who guided the German and Dutch magnates, such as Moeurs and Overstein, and who even much influenced Maurice and his cousin Count Lewis William, was himself governed by Barneveld. It would have been far from impossible for Leicester, even then, to conciliate the whole party. It was highly desirable that he should do so, for not one of the Provinces where he boasted his strength was quite secure for England. Count Moeurs, a potent and wealthy noble, was governor of Utrecht and Gelderland, and he had already begun to favour the party in Holland which claimed for that Province a legal jurisdiction over the whole ancient episcopate. Under these circumstances common prudence would have suggested that as good an understanding as possible might be kept up with the Dutch and German counts, and that the breach might not be rendered quite irreparable.

Yet, as if there had not been administrative blunders enough committed in one year, the unlucky lean Englishman, with the black beard, who was the Earl's chief representative, contrived—almost before his master's back was turned—to draw upon himself the wrath of all the fine ladies in Holland. That this should be the direful spring of unutterable disasters, social and political, was easy to foretell.

Just before the governor's departure Otheman came to pay his farewell respects, and receive his last commands. He found Leicester seated at chess with Sir Francis Drake.

"I do leave you here, my poor Otheman," said the Earl, "but so soon as I leave you I know very well that nobody will give you a good look."¹

"Your Excellency was a true prophet," wrote the secretary a few weeks later, "for, my good Lord, I have been in as great danger of my life as ever man was. I have been hunted at Delft from house to house, and then besieged in my lodg-

¹ Otheman to Leicester, 29 Jan. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

ings four or five hours, as though I had been the greatest thief, murderer, and traitor in the land."

And why was the unfortunate Otheman thus hunted to his lair? Because he had chosen to indulge in *scandalum magnum*, and had thereby excited the frenzy of all the great nobles whom it was most important for the English party to conciliate.

There had been gossip about the Princess of Chimay and one Calvaert, who lived in her house, much against the advice of all her best friends. One day she complained bitterly to Master Otheman of the spiteful ways of the world.

"I protest," said she, "that I am the unhappiest lady upon earth to have my name thus called in question."¹

So said Otheman, in order to comfort her: "Your Highness is aware that such things are said of all. I am sure I hear every day plenty of speeches about lords and ladies, queens and princesses. You have little cause to trouble yourself for such matters, being known to live honestly and like a good Christian lady. Your Highness is not the only lady spoken of."

The Princess listened with attention.

"Think of the stories about the Queen of England and my Lord of Leicester!"² said Otheman, with infinite tact. "No person is exempted from the tongues of evil speakers; but virtuous and godly men do put all such foolish matter under their feet. Then there is the *Countess of Moeurs*, how much evil talk does one hear about her!"

The Princess seemed still more interested and even excited; and the adroit Otheman having thus, as he imagined, very successfully smoothed away her anger, went off to have a little more harmless gossip about the Princess and the Countess, with Madame de Meetkerke, who had sent Leicester the rose from her garden.

But, no sooner had he gone, than away went her Highness

¹ Otheman to Leicester, last cited.

² Ibid—*totidem verbis*. It is somewhat amusing to find, in a letter to

Leicester from his own secretary, these allusions to the "scandal about Queen Elizabeth."

to Madame de Moeurs, "a marvellous wise and well-spoken gentlewoman and a grave,"¹ and informed her and the Count, with some trifling exaggeration, that the vile Englishman, secretary to the odious Leicester, had just been there, abusing and calumniating the Countess in most lewd and abominable fashion. He had also, she protested, used "very evil speeches of all the ladies in the country."² For her own part the Princess avowed her determination to have him instantly murdered.³ Count Moeurs was quite of the same mind, and desired nothing better than to be one of his executioners. Accordingly, the next Sunday, when the babbling secretary had gone down to Delft to hear the French sermon, a select party, consisting of Moeurs, Lewis William of Nassau, Count Overstein, and others, set forth for that city, laid violent hands on the culprit, and brought him bodily before Princess Chimay. There, being called upon to explain his innuendos, he fell into much trepidation, and gave the names of several English captains, whom he supposed to be at that time in England. "For if I had denied the whole matter," said he, "they would have given me the lie, and used me according to their evil mind."⁴ Upon this they relented, and released their prisoner, but, the next day they made another attack upon him, hunted him from house to house, through the whole city of Delft, and at last drove him to earth in his own lodgings, where they kept him besieged several hours. Through the intercession of Wilkes and the authority of the council of state, to which body he succeeded in conveying information of his dangerous predicament, he was, in his own language, "miraculously preserved," although remaining still in daily danger of his life. "I pray God keep me hereafter from the anger of a woman," he exclaimed, "*quia non est ira supra iram mulieris.*"⁵

He was immediately examined before the council, and succeeded in clearing and justifying himself to the satisfaction of

¹ Leicester to Walsingham, in Bruce, p. 217.

² Otheman to Leicester. MS. before cited.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

his friends. His part was afterwards taken by the councillors, by all the preachers and godly men, and by the university of Leyden. But it was well understood that the blow and the affront had been levelled at the English governor and the English nation.

"All your friends do see," said Otheman, "that this disgrace is not meant so much to me as to your Excellency; the Dutch Earls having used such speeches unto me, and against all law, custom, and reason, used such violence to me, that your Excellency shall wonder to hear of it."¹

Now the Princess Chimay, besides being of honourable character, was a sincere and exemplary member of the Calvinist church, and well inclined to the Leicestrians. She was daughter of Count Meghem, one of the earliest victims of Philip II., in the long tragedy of Netherland independence, and widow of Lancelot Berlaymont. Count Moeurs was governor of Utrecht, and by no means, up to that time, a thorough supporter of the Holland party;² but thenceforward he went off most abruptly from the party of England, became hand and glove with Hohenlo, accepted the influence of Barneveld, and did his best to wrest the city of Utrecht from English authority. Such was the effect of the secretary's harmless gossip.

"I thought Count Moeurs and his wife better friends to your Excellency than I do see them to be," said Otheman afterwards. "But he doth now disgrace the English nation many ways in his speeches—saying that they are no soldiers, that they do no good to this country, and that these Englishmen that are at Arnheim have an intent to sell and betray the town to the enemy."³

¹ Otheman to Leicester, 1 Feb. 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, C. xi. 216. MS.)

² On the contrary, although Hohenlo had been doing his best to gain him, having been drunk with him most conscientiously for a fortnight at a time, his wife, who was his commanding officer, had expressed aversion to the German party, and great affection for that of Leicester. "The Countess told me but yesterday," Otheman had

written only a few days before, "that her husband was not so foolish as to trust him, who had deceived him so often, and that *she will never permit her husband to go from the party of England.*" Otheman to Leicester, 16th Jan. 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, C. xi. p. 99. MS.)

³ Otheman to Leicester, 1 Feb. 1587. (MS. before cited.)

But the disgraceful squabble between Hohenlo and Edward Norris had been more unlucky for Leicester than any other incident during the year, for its result was to turn the hatred of both parties against himself. Yet the Earl, of all men, was originally least to blame for the transaction. It has been seen that Sir Philip Sidney had borne Norris's cartel to Hohenlo, very soon after the outrage had been committed. The Count had promised satisfaction, but meantime was desperately wounded in the attack on Fort Zutphen. Leicester afterwards did his best to keep Edward Norris employed in distant places, for he was quite aware that Hohenlo, as lieutenant-general and count of the empire, would consider himself aggrieved at being called to the field by a simple English captain, however deeply he might have injured him. The governor accordingly induced the Queen to recall the young man to England, and invited him—much as he disliked his whole race—to accompany him on his departure for that country.

The Captain then consulted with his brother Sir John, regarding the pending dispute with Hohenlo. His brother advised that the Count should be summoned to keep his promise, but that Lord Leicester's permission should previously be requested.

A week before the governor's departure, accordingly, Edward Norris presented himself one morning in the dining-room, and, finding the Earl reclining on a window-seat, observed to him that "he desired his Lordship's favour towards the discharging of his reputation."

"The Count Hollock is now well," he proceeded, "and is feasting and banqueting in his lodgings, although he does not come abroad."

"And what way will you take?" inquired Leicester, "considering that he keeps his house."

"'Twill be best, I thought," answered Norris, "to write unto him, to perform his promise he made me to answer me in the field."

"To whom did he make that promise?" asked the Earl.

"To Sir Philip Sidney," answered the Captain.

"To my nephew Sidney," said Leicester, musingly ; " very well ; do as you think best, and I will do for you what I can." ¹

And the governor then added many kind expressions concerning the interest he felt in the young man's reputation. Passing to other matters, Norris then spoke of the great charges he had recently been put to by reason of having exchanged out of the States' service in order to accept a commission from his Lordship to levy a company of horse. This levy had cost him and his friends three hundred pounds, for which he had not been able to " get one groat."

"I beseech your Lordship to stand good for me," said he ; " considering the meanest captain in all the country hath as good entertainment as I."

"I can do but little for you before my departure," said Leicester ; " but at my return I will advise to do more."

After this amicable conversation Norris thanked his Lordship, took his leave, and straightway wrote his letter to Count Hollock.²

That personage, in his answer, expressed astonishment that Norris should summon him, in his " weakness and indisposition ;" but agreed to give him the desired meeting, with sword and dagger, so soon as he should be sufficiently recovered. Norris, in reply, acknowledged his courteous promise, and hoped that he might be speedily restored to health.³

The state-council, sitting at the Hague, took up the matter at once however, and requested immediate information of the Earl. He accordingly sent for Norris and his brother Sir John, who waited upon him in his bed-chamber, and were requested to set down in writing the reasons which had moved them in the matter. This statement was accordingly

¹ Edward Norris to the Lords, 28 July, 1587. Sir John Norris to Walsingham, same date. (S. P. Office MS.)

² *Ibid.*

³ Edward Norris to Leicester (the correspondence with Hohenlo enclosed),

Nov. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.) Compare Bruce's 'Leyc. Corresp.,' Appendix, 474, 475. Remonstrance of Count Hohenlo to the States-General, 3 Dec. 1587; *apud* Bor, III. xxiii. 121-129 Reyd, V. 80, 81.

furnished, together with a copy of the correspondence. The Earl took the papers, and promised to allow most honourably of it in the Council."¹

Such is the exact narrative, word for word, as given by Sir John and Edward Norris, in a solemn memorial to the Lords of Her Majesty's privy council, as well as to the state-council of the United Provinces. A very few days afterwards Leicester departed for England, taking Edward Norris with him.

Count Hohenlo was furious at the indignity, notwithstanding the polite language in which he had accepted the challenge. "'T was a matter punishable with death," he said, "in all kingdoms and countries, for a simple captain to send such a summons to a man of his station, without consent of the supreme authority. It was plain," he added, "that the English governor-general had connived at the affront, for Norris had been living in his family and dining at his table. Nay, more, Lord Leicester had made him a knight at Flushing just before their voyage to England."²

There seems no good reason to doubt the general veracity of the brothers Norris, although, for the express purpose of screening Leicester, Sir John represented at the time to Hohenlo and others that the Earl had not been privy to the transaction.³ It is very certain, however, that so soon as the general indignation of Hohenlo and his partizans began to be directed against Leicester, he at once denied, in passionate and abusive language, having had any knowledge whatever of Norris's intentions. He protested that he learned, for the first time, of the cartel from information furnished to the council of state.

¹ E. Norris to the Lords. J. Norris to Leicester. (MSS. before cited.) E. Norris to Leicester, 21 Nov. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Remonstrance of Hohenlo, before cited. Hooft, Vervolgh, 209.

³ "For all this I will assure you that I did always, both to the Council, the States, and Count Hollock, confidently deny [i. e. maintain] that my

Lord knew not of it, because they should not for this matter have any advantage against his Lordship." Sir John Norris to Sir F. Walsingham, before cited.

The two negatives do not here make an affirmative; but it is evident that Leicester made great use of this damaging denial on the part of Norris.

The quarrel between Hohenlo and Norris was afterwards amicably arranged by Lord Buckhurst, during his embassy to the States, at the express desire of the Queen. Hohenlo and Sir John Norris became very good friends, while the enmity between them and Leicester grew more deadly every day. The Earl was frantic with rage whenever he spoke of the transaction, and denounced Sir John Norris as "a fool, liar, and coward" on all occasions, besides overwhelming his brother, Buckhurst, Wilkes, and every other person who took their part, with a torrent of abuse; and it is well known that the Earl was a master of Billingsgate.¹

"Hollock says that I did procure Edward Norris to send him his cartel," observed Leicester on one occasion, "wherein I protest before the Lord, I was as ignorant as any man in England. His brother John can tell whether I did not send for him to have committed him for it; but that, in very truth, upon the perusing of it" (after it had been sent), "it was very reasonably written, and I did consider also the great wrong offered him by the Count, and so forbore it. I was so careful for the Count's safety after the brawl between him and Norris, that I charged Sir John, if any harm came to the Count's person by any of his or under him, that he should answer it. Therefore, I take the story to be bred in the bosom of some much like a thief or villain, whatsoever he were."²

And all this was doubtless true so far as regarded the Earl's original exertions to prevent the consequences of the quarrel, but did not touch the point of the *second correspondence* preceded by the conversation in the dining-room, eight days before the voyage to England. The affair, in itself of slight importance, would not merit so much comment at this late day had it not been for its endless consequences. The

¹ J. Norris to Walsingham, 14 March, 1587. Same to same, 3 June, 1587. (S. P. Office MSS.)

"The best is, such tales can no more irritate my Lord's anger against me," said Sir John; "for since he affirmeth that I am a fool, a coward,

and a hinderer of all these services, I know not what more he can be provoked to."

² Leicester to Buckhurst, 30 April, 1587. Same to Walsingham, 4 Aug 1587. (S. P. Office MSS.)

ferocity with which the Earl came to regard every prominent German, Hollander, and Englishman, engaged in the service of the States, sprang very much from the complications of this vulgar brawl. Norris, Hohenlo, Wilkes, Buckhurst, were all denounced to the Queen as calumniators, traitors, and villains; and it may easily be understood how grave and extensive must have been the effects of such vituperation upon the mind of Elizabeth,¹ who, until the last day of his life, doubtless entertained for the Earl the deepest affection of which her nature was susceptible. Hohenlo, with Count Maurice, were the acknowledged chiefs of the anti-English party, and the possibility of cordial cooperation between the countries may be judged of by the entanglement which had thus occurred.

Leicester had always hated Sir John Norris, but he knew that the mother had still much favour with the Queen, and he was therefore the more vehement in his denunciations of the son the more difficulty he found in entirely destroying his character, and the keener jealousy he felt that any other tongue but his should influence her Majesty. "The story of John Norris about the cartel is, by the Lord God, most false," he exclaimed; "I do beseech you not to see me so dealt withal, but that especially her Majesty may understand these untruths, who perhaps, by *the mother's fair speeches and the son's smooth words*, may take some other conceit of my doings than I deserve."²

He was most resolute to stamp the character of falsehood upon both the brothers, for he was more malignant towards Sir John than towards any man in the world, not even ex-

¹ *E. g.* "The lies which Lord Buckhurst, Sir J. Norris, and Wilkes, did with their malicious wits and slanderous tongues devise and utter," wrote Leicester to the Privy Council, "concern my honour and my life, I demand that I, being found clear, and they to have slandered me, may have that remedy against them which is in justice due." Leicester to the Privy Council, 19 Aug. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Leicester to Burghley, 11 Sept. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.) The meddling Otheman seems to have made himself privately very busy in this affair. He sent Leicester copies of the letters written by the brothers Norris, and declared that he was "enticed by them, in the Earl's absence, to become a forger and liar in this matter, but utterly refused." MS. last cited.

cepting Wilkes. To the Queen, to the Lords of the Privy Council, to Walsingham, to Burghley, he poured forth endless quantities of venom, enough to destroy the characters of a hundred honest men.

"The declaration of the two Norrises for the cartel is most false, as I am a Christian," he said to Walsingham. "I have a dozen witnesses, as good and some better than they, who will testify that they were present when I misliked the writing of the letter before ever I saw it. And by the allegiance I owe to her Majesty, I never knew of the letter, nor gave consent to it, nor heard of it till it was complained of from Count Hollock. But, as they are false in this, so you will find J. N. as false in his other answers; so that he would be ashamed, but that his old conceit hath made him past shame, I fear. His companions in Ireland, as in these countries, report that *Sir John Norris* would often say that *he was but an ass and a fool, who, if a lie would serve his turn, would spare it. I remember I have heard that the Earl of Sussex would say so; and indeed this gentleman doth imitate him in divers things.*"¹

¹ Leicester to Walsingham, 12 Aug. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.) To the Lord Treasurer the Earl took pains to narrate the whole story, with much emphasis, and in minute detail; and it is important to lay it before the reader, as an offset to the simple and apparently truthful narrative of Edward Norris, because such intimate revelations indicate to us the really trifling springs of numerous great events. As before observed, the affair in itself is one which history should justly disdain, but it swells into considerable importance, both on account of its extensive results, and from the light which it throws on the character of Leicester, the most important personage, during his lifetime, in the whole kingdom of England.

"Would God," said Leicester to Burghley, "that it had pleased her Majesty to have suffered my Lord Buckhurst and Sir John Norris to have gone on with their plot, for they laid a most malicious plot against me. As

for the answer that Sir John Norris and his brother have made touching their acquainting me with the cartel to Count Hollock, thus made now to your Lordship, if ever I knew or heard any news of this cartel till complaint came to me from the Count, I renounce my allegiance and fidelity to my Sovereign Lady. Therefore mark the arrogant boldness of those young fellows that will face a lie of that sort. But I have here Sir William Pelham and Sir William Russel, besides others that were present when I called Sir John to me, and threatened to lay his brother by the heels, and himself too, if he were privy to it. He then besought me to hear his brother and to see the letters, assuring me there was no such cartel as was reported. I commanded him to give me the copy of his letters, and bring it to me. Meanwhile, I was gone to the council, and whilst we were at council, an hour or two after, Edward Norris sent me his letters,

But a very grave disaster to Holland and England was soon the fruit of the hatred borne by Leicester to Sir John Norris. Immediately after the battle of Zutphen and the investment of that town by the English and Netherlanders,

which I took to Wilkes before I did so much as look into them. Being openly read there, we did indeed perceive so direct a cartel as could be made, and divers of the council made the best of it, and so did I, declaring what the gent. was. Yet did I then declare to them all what order I had taken for Norris, that he should go with me to England, and that her Majesty had also sent for him, protesting to your Lordships, by all faith, honour, and truth, that neither the one nor the other did dare to use those speeches that they have set down; saving that one of the servants of Sir John Norris came to me, hearing that his brother should go over, to know how his credit should be saved with the Count Hollock, touching the disgrace he was in, with such like words. I answered, 'the Count Hollock is now sick and sore, and it were no honesty for Sir John's brother to offer him any quarrel. Besides, I will not suffer it, so long as I am here, and Edward Norris is commanded to go into England. *No doubt the Count will remember his promise, which—as Sir John Norris had told me—was, that when the camp was broken up, he will answer his brother in the field, like a gentleman.*' Never was there more—never did any of them tell me of any cartel to be sent—never did any speak with me at Deventer.

Besides, after I was gone, lying on shipboard at Brill, Edward Norris being then in ship with me, there came a messenger from the Count Hollock, with a letter to me, about midnight. This messenger was only to let me know of the Count's having received such letters and brags from Norris, and that now he began to amend, Norris, as he heard, was gone away with me into England. He marvelled much he would do so, and sent his messenger to see if it were so. I answered him, it was so, for the gentleman, Sir Edward Norris, lay there asleep, and he was to go into

England by her Majesty's express commandment. For my part, I said, I was willing also to carry him with me, for that I would be loth to leave any occasion behind me of trouble or discord, knowing already some mislike to be between his brother John and the Count. This was my answer. Now, judge how likely these tales be that I would consent that Norris should send a cartel, and yet take him away when he should perform the matter. Either he must show to be a coward, or else, if he were in earnest, he must seem to be angry with me for taking him away. If ever there were other speeches, either by the one Norris or the other, or if ever I knew of this cartel, directly or indirectly, more than your Lordship that was in England, till the complaint came to me of it, I am the falsest wretch that lives. If I had liked of their quarrels or cartels, there was means enough for me to leave them to their own revenge. I have troubled your Lordship too long with this trifle, but you should know the shameless audacity of these young fellows, whose cunning sly heads you had need look into." Leicester to Burghley, 12 Aug. 1587. (Br. Mus. Galba, D. I. 240, MS.)

Thus the November letter was not seen by Leicester before it was sent, although he was aware that it was to be sent, and in that circumstance seemed to reside the whole strength of his case. So soon as it appeared that the state-council was angry, and that the Count considered himself outraged, the Earl seems to have taken advantage of a subterfuge, and to have made up by violence what he lacked in argument.

It is difficult to imagine a more paltry affair to occupy the attention of grave statesmen and generals for months, and to fill the archives of kingdom and commonwealth with mountains of correspondence.

great pains were taken to secure the city of Deventer. This was, after Amsterdam and Antwerp, the most important mercantile place in all the Provinces. It was a large prosperous commercial and manufacturing capital, a member of the Hanseatic League, and the great centre of the internal trade of the Netherlands with the Baltic nations. There was a strong Catholic party in the town, and the magistracy were disposed to side with Parma. It was notorious that provisions and munitions were supplied from thence to the beleaguered Zutphen; and Leicester despatched Sir William Pelham, accordingly, to bring the inhabitants to reason. The stout Marshal made short work of it. Taking Sir William Stanley and the greater part of his regiment with him, he caused them, day by day, to steal into the town, in small parties of ten and fifteen. No objection was made to this proceeding on the part of the city government. Then Stanley himself arrived in the morning, and the Marshal in the evening, of the 20th of October. Pelham ordered the magistrates to present themselves forthwith at his lodgings, and told them, with grim courtesy, that the Earl of Leicester excused himself from making them a visit, not being able, for grief at the death of Sir Philip Sidney, to come so soon near the scene of his disaster. His Excellency had therefore sent him to require the town to receive an English garrison. "So make up your minds, and delay not," said Pelham; "for I have many important affairs on my hands, and must send word to his Excellency at once. To-morrow morning, at eight o'clock, I shall expect your answer."¹

Next day, the magistrates were all assembled in the town-house before six. Stanley had filled the great square with his troops, but he found that the burghers—five thousand of whom constituted the municipal militia—had chained the streets and locked the gates. At seven o'clock Pelham proceeded to the town-house, and, followed by his train, made his appearance before the magisterial board. Then there was

¹ Letter of Henry Archer, from Utrecht, 23 Oct. 1586, in the Appendix to Mr. Bruce's admirably edited

volume of 'Leicester Correspondence,' 478-480.

a knocking at the door, and Sir William Stanley entered, having left a strong guard of soldiers at the entrance to the hall.

"I am come for an answer," said the Lord Marshal; "tell me straight." The magistrates hesitated, whispered, and presently one of them slipped away.

"There's one of you gone," cried the Marshal. "Fetch him straight back; or, by the living God, before whom I stand, there is not one of you shall leave this place with life."

So the burgomasters sent for the culprit, who returned.

"Now, tell me," said Pelham, "why you have, this night, chained your streets and kept such strong watch while your friends and defenders were in the town? Do you think we came over here to spend our lives and our goods, and to leave all we have, to be thus used and thus betrayed by you? Nay, you shall find us trusty to our friends, but as politic as yourselves. Now, then, set your hands to this document," he proceeded, as he gave them a new list of magistrates, all selected from stanch Protestants.

"Give over your government to the men here nominated, Straight; dally not!"

The burgomasters signed the paper.

"Now," said Pelham, "let one of you go to the watch, discharge the guard, bid them unarm, and go home to their lodgings."

A magistrate departed on the errand.

"Now fetch me the keys of the gate," said Pelham, "and that straightway, or, before God, you shall die."

The keys were brought, and handed to the peremptory old Marshal. The old board of magistrates were then clapped into prison, the new ones installed, and Deventer was gained for the English and Protestant party.¹

There could be no doubt that a city so important and thus fortunately secured was worthy to be well guarded. There could be no doubt either that it would be well to conciliate the rich and influential Papists in the place, who, although

¹ Letter of Henry Archer, &c., just cited.

attached to the ancient religion, were not necessarily disloyal to the republic ; but there could be as little that, under the circumstances of this sudden municipal revolution, it would be important to place a garrison of Protestant soldiers there, under the command of a Protestant officer of known fidelity.

To the astonishment of the whole commonwealth, the Earl appointed Sir William Stanley to be governor of the town, and stationed in it a garrison of twelve hundred wild Irishmen.¹

Sir William was a cadet of one of the noblest English houses. He was the bravest of the brave. His gallantry at the famous Zutphen fight had attracted admiration, where nearly all had performed wondrous exploits, but he was known to be an ardent Papist and a soldier of fortune, who had fought on various sides, and had even borne arms in the Netherlands under the ferocious Alva.² Was it strange that there should be murmurs at the appointment of so dangerous a chief to guard a wavering city which had so recently been secured ?

The Irish kernes—and they are described by all contemporaries, English and Flemish, in the same language—were accounted as the wildest and fiercest of barbarians. There was something grotesque, yet appalling, in the pictures painted of these rude, almost naked, brigands, who ate raw flesh, spoke no intelligible language, and ranged about the country, burning, slaying, plundering, a terror to the peasantry and a source of constant embarrassment to the more orderly troops in the service of the republic. “It seemed,” said one who had seen them, “that they belonged not to Christendom, but to Brazil.”³ Moreover, they were all Papists, and, however much one might be disposed to censure that great curse of the age, religious intolerance—which was almost as flagrant in the councils of Queen Elizabeth as in those of Philip—it was certainly a most fatal policy to place such a garrison, at that critical juncture, in the newly-acquired

¹ *Reyd*, v. 85. J. Norris to Burghley, 21 Jan. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

city. Yet Leicester, who had banished Papists from Utrecht without cause and without trial, now placed most notorious Catholics in Deventer.¹

Zutphen, which was still besieged by the English and the patriots, was much crippled by the loss of the great fort, the capture of which, mainly through the brilliant valour of Stanley's brother Edward, has already been related. The possession of Deventer and of this fort gave the control of the whole north-eastern territory to the patriots; but, as if it were not enough to place Deventer in the hands of Sir William Stanley, Leicester thought proper to confide the government of the fort to Roland York. Not a worse choice could be made in the whole army.

York was an adventurer of the most audacious and dissolute character. He was a Londoner by birth, one of those "ruffling blades" inveighed against by the governor-general on his first taking command of the forces. A man of desperate courage, a gambler, a professional duellist, a bravo, famous in his time among the "common hacksters and swaggers" as the first to introduce the custom of foining, or thrusting with the rapier in single combats—whereas before his day it had been customary among the English to fight with sword and shield, and held unmanly to strike below the girdle²—he had perpetually changed sides, in the Netherland wars, with the shameless disregard to principle which characterized all his actions. He had been lieutenant to the infamous John Van Imbyze, and had been concerned with him in the notorious attempt to surrender Dendermonde and Ghent to the enemy, which had cost that traitor his head. York had been thrown into prison at Brussels, but there had been some delay about his execution, and the conquest of the city by Parma saved him from the gibbet. He had then taken service under the Spanish commander-in-chief, and had distinguished himself, as usual, by deeds of extraordinary valour, having sprung on board the burning

¹ Reynd. *ubi sup.* Le Petit, II. xiv. 341. Bor, II. xxii. 878-879. Wagenaar, viii. 196. Meteren, xiv. 250.

² Camden, III. 397. Baker's 'Chronicle,' 375.

volcano-ship at the siege of Antwerp. Subsequently returning to England, he had, on Leicester's appointment, obtained the command of a company in the English contingent, and had been conspicuous on the field of Warnsveld ; for the courage which he always displayed under any standard was only equalled by the audacity with which he was ever ready to desert from it. Did it seem credible that the fort of Zutphen should be placed in the hands of Roland York ?

Remonstrances were made by the States-General at once. With regard to Stanley, Leicester maintained that he was, in his opinion, the fittest man to take charge of the whole English army, during his absence in England.¹ In answer to a petition made by the States against the appointment of York, "in respect to his perfidious dealings before," the Earl replied that he would answer for his fidelity as for his own brother ; adding peremptorily—"Do you trust me ? Then trust York."²

But, besides his other qualifications for high command, Stanley possessed an inestimable one in Leicester's eyes. He was, or at least had been, an enemy of Sir John Norris. To be this made a Papist pardonable. It was even better than to be a Puritan.

But the Earl did more than to appoint the traitor York and the Papist Stanley to these important posts. On the very day of his departure, and immediately after his final quarrel with Sir John about the Hohenlo cartel, which had renewed all the ancient venom, he signed a secret paper, by which he especially forbade the council of state to interfere with or set aside any appointments to the government of towns or forts, or to revoke any military or naval commissions, without his consent.³

Now supreme executive authority had been delegated to the state-council by the Governor-General during his absence. Command in chief over all the English forces,

¹ Wilkes to Leicester, 24 Jan. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Ibid. Sir John Conway to Wal-

tingham, 28 Jan. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Meteren, xiii. 238. Bor, II. xxii. 786-787. Wagenaar, viii. 188-189.

whether in the Queen's pay or the State's pay, had been conferred upon Norris, while command over the Dutch and German troops belonged to Hohenlo ; but, by virtue of the Earl's secret paper, Stanley and York were now made independent of all authority. The evil consequences natural to such a step were not slow in displaying themselves.

Stanley at once manifested great insolence towards Norris. That distinguished general was placed in a most painful position. A post of immense responsibility was confided to him. The honour of England's Queen and of England's soldiers was entrusted to his keeping, at a moment full of danger, and in a country where every hour might bring forth some terrible change ; yet he knew himself the mark at which the most powerful man in England was directing all his malice, and that the Queen, who was wax in her great favourite's hands, was even then receiving the most fatal impressions as to his character and conduct. "Well I know," said he to Burghley, "that the root of the former malice borne me is not withered, but that I must look for like fruits therefrom as before ;"¹ and he implored the Lord-Treasurer, that when his honour and reputation should be called in question, he might be allowed to return to England and clear himself. "For myself," said he, "I have not yet received any commission, although I have attended his Lordship of Leicester to his ship. It is promised to be sent me, and in the meantime I understand that my Lord hath granted separate commissions to Sir William Stanley and Roland York, exempting them from obeying of me. If this be true, 'tis only done to nourish factions, and to interrupt any better course in our doings than before hath been." He earnestly requested to be furnished with a commission directly from her Majesty. "The enemy is reinforcing," he added. "We are very weak, our troops are unpaid these three months, and we are grown odious to our friends."²

Honest Councillor Wilkes, who did his best to conciliate all parties, and to do his duty to England and Holland, to

¹ J. Norris to Burghley, 17 Nov. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² *Ibid.*

Leicester and to Norris, had the strongest sympathy with Sir John. "Truly, besides the value, wisdom, and many other good parts that are in him," he said, "I have noted wonderful patience and modesty in the man, in bearing many apparent injuries done unto him, which I have known to be countenanced and nourished, contrary to all reason, to disgrace him. Please therefore continue your honourable opinion of him in his absence, whatsoever may be maliciously reported to his disadvantage, for I dare avouch, of my own poor skill, that her Majesty hath not a second subject of his place and quality so able to serve in those countries as he. . . . I doubt not but God will move her Majesty, in despite of the devil, to respect him as he deserves."¹

Sir John disclaimed any personal jealousy in regard to Stanley's appointment, but, within a week or two of the Earl's departure, he already felt strong anxiety as to its probable results. "If it prove no hindrance to the service," he said, "it shall nothing trouble me. I desire that my doings may show what I am ; neither will I seek, by indirect means to calumniate him or any other, but will let them show themselves."²

Early in December he informed the Lord-Treasurer that Stanley's own men were boasting that their master acknowledged no superior authority to his own, and that he had said as much himself to the magistracy of Deventer. The burghers had already complained, through the constituted guardians of their liberties, of his insolence and rapacity, and of the turbulence of his troops, and had appealed to Sir John ; but the colonel-general's remonstrances had been received by Sir William with contumely and abuse, and by the vaunt that he had even a greater commission than any he had yet shown.³

"Three sheep, an ox, and a whole hog," were required

¹ Wilkes to Burghley, 17 Nov. 1586.
Same to Walsingham, 17 May, 1587.
(S. P. Office MSS.)

² J. Norris to Walsingham, 9 Dec.

1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Same to Burghley, 12 Dec. 1586.
(S. P. Office MS.)

weekly of the peasants for his table, in a time of great scarcity, and it was impossible to satisfy the rapacious appetites of the Irish kernes.¹ The paymaster-general of the English forces was daily appealed to by Stanley for funds—an application which was certainly not unreasonable, as her Majesty's troops had not received any payment for three months—but there “was not a denier in the treasury,” and he was therefore implored to wait. At last the States-General sent him a month's pay for himself and all his troops, although, as he was in the Queen's service, no claim could justly be made upon them.²

Wilkes, also, as English member of the state council, faithfully conveyed to the governor-general in England the complaints which came up to all the authorities of the republic, against Sir William Stanley's conduct in Deventer. He had seized the keys of the gates, he kept possession of the towers and fortifications, he had meddled with the civil government, he had infringed all their privileges. Yet this was the board of magistrates, expressly set up by Leicester, with the armed hand, by the agency of Marshal Pelham and this very Colonel Stanley—a board of Calvinist magistrates placed but a few weeks before in power to control a city of Catholic tendencies. And here was a papist commander displaying Leicester's commission in their faces, and making it a warrant for dealing with the town as if it were under martial law, and as if he

¹ Wilkes to Walsingham, 19 Jan. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² “He is not contented with the entertainment of 40*l*. sterling a month allowed him by the States as governor of the place, but hath taken perforce from the commissioners lately sent thither to *deliver a month's pay*, an allowance of 10*l*. sterling a month over and besides for every company of his regiment, being, as he sayeth, ten companies, amounting by the muster to 1400 florins (140*l*.), besides a pay for his own company, which is more than is allowed to Sir J. Norris by 300 florins a month, and as much as is given for entertainment to Count

Hohenlo, or to any earl that serveth in these countries. He is charged further to take within the country hereabouts, from the poor villagers, weekly, for the provisions of his table, one whole ox, three sheep, and one hog, or in lieu of the hog, twenty shillings sterling; and if it be not brought every week, they sent the soldiers to take it perforce,” &c. &c. Wilkes to Walsingham, 19 Jan. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

This certainly was stronger diet than the “bare cheese” of which Sir William complained. Compare *Reyd*, vi. 96-97. *Bor*, II. *xxii*. 878-879.

were an officer of the Duke of Parma. It might easily be judged whether such conduct were likely to win the hearts of Netherlanders to Leicester and to England.¹

"Albeit, for my own part," said Wilkes, "I do hold Sir William Stanley to be a wise and a discreet gent., yet when I consider that the magistracy is such as was established by your Lordship, and of the religion, and well affected to her Majesty, and that I see how heavily the matter is conceived of here by the States and council, I do fear that all is not well. The very bruit of this doth begin to draw hatred upon our nation. Were it not that I doubt some dangerous issue of this matter, and that I might be justly charged with negligence, if I should not advertise you beforehand, I would have forborne to mention this dissension, for the States are about to write to your Lordship and to her Majesty for reformation in this matter."² He added that he had already written earnestly to Sir William, "hoping to persuade him to carry a mild hand over the people."

Thus wrote Councillor Wilkes, as in duty bound, to Lord Leicester, so early as the 9th December, and the warning voice of Norris had made itself heard in England quite as soon. Certainly the governor-general, having, upon his own responsibility, and prompted, it would seem, by passion more than reason, made this dangerous appointment, was fortunate in receiving timely and frequent notice of its probable results.

And the conscientious Wilkes wrote most earnestly, as he said he had done, to the turbulent Stanley.

"Good Sir William," said he, "the magistrates and burgesses of Deventer complain to this council, that you have by violence wrested from them the keys of one of their gates, that you assemble your garrison in arms to terrify them, that you have seized one of their forts, that the Irish soldiers do commit many extortions and exactions upon the inhabitants, that you have imprisoned their burgesses, and do many things against their laws and privileges, so that it is feared the best affected

¹ Wilkes to Leicester, 9 Dec. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² *Ibid.*

of the inhabitants towards her Majesty will forsake the town. Whether any of these things be true, yourself doth best know, but I do assure you that the apprehension thereof here doth make us and our government hateful. For mine own part, I have always known you for a gentleman of value, wisdom, and judgment, and therefore should hardly believe any such thing. . . . I earnestly require you to take heed of consequences, and to be careful of the honour of her Majesty and the reputation of our nation. You will consider that the gaining possession of the town grew by them that are now in office, who being of the religion, and well affected to his Excellency's government, wrought his entry into the same. . . . I know that Lord Leicester is sworn to maintain all the inhabitants of the Provinces in their ancient privileges and customs. I know further that your commission carreeth no authority to warrant you to intermeddle any further than with the government of the soldiers and guard of the town. Well, you may, *in your own conceipt*, confer some words to authorize you in some larger sort, but, believe me, Sir, they will not warrant you sufficiently to deal any further than I have said, for I have perused a copy of your commission for that purpose. I *know the name itself of a governor of a town is odious to this people*, and hath been ever since *the remembrance of the Spanish government*, and if we, by any lack of foresight, should give the like occasion, *we should make ourselves as odious as they are*, which God forbid.

"You are to consider that we are not come into these countries *for their defence* only, but for the defence of her Majesty and our own native country, knowing that *the preservation of both dependeth altogether upon the preserving of these*. Wherefore I do eftsoons intreat and require you to forbear to intermeddle any further. If there shall follow any dangerous effect of your proceedings after this my friendly advice, I shall be heartily sorry for your sake, but I shall be able to testify to her Majesty that I have done my duty in admonishing you."¹

¹ Wilkes to Stanley, 9 Dec. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

Thus spake the stiff councillor, earnestly and well, in behalf of England's honour and the good name of England's Queen.

But the brave soldier, whose feet were fast sliding into the paths of destruction, replied, in a tone of indignant innocence, more likely to aggravate than to allay suspicion. "Finding," said Stanley, "that you already threaten, I have gone so far as to scan the terms of my commission, which I doubt not to execute, *according to his Excellency's meaning and mine honour*. First, I assure you that I have maintained justice, and that severely; else hardly would the soldiers have been contented with bread and bare cheese."¹

He acknowledged possessing himself of the keys of the town, but defended it on the ground of necessity, and of the character of the people, "who thrust out the Spaniards and Almaynes, and afterwards never would obey the Prince and States." "I would be," he said, "*the sorriest man that lives*, if by my negligence the place should be lost. Therefore I thought good to seize the great tower and ports. If I meant evil, I *needed no keys, for here is force enough*."²

With much effrontery, he then affected to rely for evidence of his courteous and equitable conduct towards the citizens, upon the very magistrates who had been petitioning the States-General, the state-council, and the English Queen, against his violence.

"For my courtesy and humanity," he said, "I refer me unto the magistrates themselves. But I think they sent some *rhetoricians*, who could allege of little grief, and speak pitiful, and truly I find your ears have been as pitiful in so timorously condemning me. *I assure you that her Majesty hath not a better servant than I nor a more faithful* in these parts. This I will prove with my flesh and blood. Although I know there be divers flying reports spread by my enemies, which are come to my ears, I doubt not my virtue and truth will prove them calumniators³ and men of little. So, good

¹ Stanley to Wilkes, 14 Dec. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Ibid.

³ "*Callaminators*," so Sir William

called the men who were speaking the truth about him. (MS. *ubi sup.*) He was more used to handle the sword

Mr. Wilkes, I pray you, consider gravely, give ear discreetly, and advertise into England soundly. For me, I have been and am your friend, and glad to hear any admonition from one so wise as yourself."

He then alluded ironically to the "good favour and money" with which he had been so contented of late, that if Mr. Wilkes would discharge him of his promise to Lord Leicester, he would take his leave with all his heart. Captain, officers, and soldiers, had been living on half a pound of cheese a day. For himself, he had received but one hundred and twenty pounds in five months, and was living at three pounds by the day. "This my wealth will not long hold out," he observed, "but yet I will never fail of my promise to his Excellency, whatsoever I endure. It is for her Majesty's service and for the love I bear to him."

He bitterly complained of the unwillingness of the country-people to furnish vivers, waggons, and other necessities, for the fort before Zutphen. "Had it not been," he said, "for the travail extraordinary of myself, *and patience of my brother Yorke*, that fort would have been in danger. But, according to *his desire and forethought*, I furnished that place with cavalry and infantry; for I know the troops there be marvellous weak."¹

In reply, Wilkes stated that the complaints had been made "by no *rhetorician*, but by letter from the magistrates themselves (on whom he relied so confidently) to the state-council. The councillor added, rather tartly, that since his honest words of defence and of warning, had been "taken in so scoffing a manner," Sir William might be sure of not being troubled with any more of his letters.²

But, a day or two before thus addressing him, he had already enclosed to Leicester very important letters addressed by the council of Gelderland to Count Moeurs, stadholder of the Province, and by him forwarded to the state-council. For

than the pen, yet the untaught vigour of his style causes an additional regret that a man so brave and so capable should have thrown himself

away.

¹ Stanley to Wilkes, *ubi sup.*

² Wilkes to Stanley, 18 Dec. 1588 (S. P. Office MS.)

there were now very grave rumours concerning the fidelity of "that patient and foreseeing brother York," whom Stanley had been so generously strengthening in Fort Zutphen. The lieutenant of York, a certain Mr. Zouch, had been seen within the city of Zutphen, in close conference with Colonel Tassis, Spanish governor of the place.¹ Moreover there had been a very frequent exchange of courtesies—by which the horrors of war seemed to be much mitigated—between York on the outside and Tassis within. The English commander sent baskets of venison, wild fowl, and other game, which were rare in the market of a besieged town. The Spanish governor responded with baskets of excellent wine and barrels of beer.² A very pleasant state of feeling, perhaps, to contemplate—as an advance in civilization over the not very distant days of the Haarlem and Leyden sieges, when barrels of prisoners' heads, cut off, a dozen or two at a time, were the social amenities usually exchanged between Spaniards and Dutchmen—but somewhat suspicious to those who had grown grey in this horrible warfare.

The Irish kerns too, were allowed to come to mass within the city, and were received there with as much fraternity by the Catholic soldiers of Tassis as the want of any common dialect would allow—a proceeding which seemed better perhaps for the salvation of their souls, than for the advancement of the siege.³

The state-council had written concerning these rumours to Roland York, but the patient man had replied in a manner which Wilkes characterized as "unfit to have been given to such as were the executors of the Earl of Leicester's authority." The councillor implored the governor-general accordingly to send some speedy direction in this matter, as well to Roland York as to Sir William Stanley; for he explicitly

¹ "Le Conseil de Gueldres au Comte de Mœurs et Nieuwenaer, 14 Dec. 1586. Wilkes to Leicester, 16 Dec. 1586. (S. P. Office MSS.)

² Hoofd, Vervolgh, 220. Reyd, vi. 95.

³ Wilkes to Stanley, 17 Dec. 1586, MS. strongly remonstrating against the practice. Hoofd, Reyd, *ubi sup.* Wagenaar, viii. 196.

and earnestly warned him, that those personages would pay no heed to the remonstrances of the state-council.¹

Thus again and again was Leicester—on whose head rested, by his own deliberate act, the whole responsibility—forewarned that some great mischief was impending. There was time enough even then—for it was but the 16th December—to place full powers in the hands of the state-council, of Norris, or of Hohenlo, and secretly and swiftly to secure the suspected persons, and avert the danger. Leicester did nothing. How could he acknowledge his error? How could he manifest confidence in the detested Norris? How appeal to the violent and deeply incensed Hohenlo?

Three weeks more rolled by, and the much-enduring Roland York was still in confidential correspondence with Leicester and Walsingham, although his social intercourse with the Spanish governor of Zutphen continued to be upon the most liberal and agreeable footing. He was not quite satisfied with the general aspect of the Queen's cause in the Netherlands, and wrote to the Secretary of State in a tone of despondency, and mild expostulation. Walsingham would have been less edified by these communications, had he been aware that York, upon *first entering Leicester's service*, had immediately opened a correspondence with the Duke of Parma, and had secretly given him to understand that his *object was to serve the cause of Spain*. This was indeed the fact, as the Duke informed the King, "but then he is such a scatter-brained, reckless dare-devil," said Parma, "that I hardly expected much of him."² Thus the astute Sir Francis had been outwitted by the adventurous Roland, who was perhaps destined also to surpass the anticipations of the Spanish commander-in-chief.

Meantime York informed his English patrons, on the 7th January, that matters were not proceeding so smoothly in the

¹ Wilkes to Leicester, 16 Dec. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Parma to Philip II. 12 Feb. 1587.

"Tan liviano y arriscado," &c. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

political world as he could wish. He had found "many cross and indirect proceedings," and so, according to Lord Leicester's desire, he sent him a "discourse" on the subject, which he begged Sir Francis to "peruse, add to, or take away from," and then to inclose to the Earl. He hoped he should be forgiven if the style of the production was not quite satisfactory; for, said he, "the place where I am doth too much torment my memory, to call every point to my remembrance."¹

It must, in truth, have been somewhat a hard task upon his memory, to keep freshly in mind every detail of the parallel correspondence which he was carrying on with the Spanish and with the English government. Even a cool head like Roland's might be forgiven for being occasionally puzzled. "So if there be anything hard to be understood," he observed to Walsingham, "advertise me, and I will make it plainer." Nothing could be more ingenuous. He confessed, however, to being out of pocket. "Please your honour," said he, "I have taken great pains to make a bad place something, and it has cost me all the money I had, and here I can receive nothing but discontentment. I dare *not write you all* lest you should think it impossible," he added—and it is quite probable that even Walsingham would have been astonished, had Roland written all. The game playing by York and Stanley was not one to which English gentlemen were much addicted.

"I trust the bearer, Edward Stanley, a discreet, brave gentleman," he said, "with details." And the remark proves that the gallant youth who had captured this very Fort Zutphen in so brilliant a manner was not privy to the designs of his brother and of York; for the object of the "discourse" was to deceive the English government.

"I humbly beseech that you will send for me home," concluded Roland, "for true as I humbled my mind to please her Majesty, your honour, and the dead,² now am I content to humble myself lower to please myself, for now, since his

¹ Rowland York to Walsingham, 7 Jan. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² By the dead, he meant Sir Philip

Sidney, who had been deceived into a friendly feeling for the adventurer. Meteren, xiv. 250.

Excellency's departure, there is no form of proceeding neither honourably nor honestly.¹

Three other weeks passed over, weeks of anxiety and dread throughout the republic. Suspicion grew darker than ever, not only as to York and Stanley, but as to all the English commanders, as to the whole English nation. An Anjou plot, a general massacre, was expected by many, yet there were no definite grounds for such dark anticipations. In vain had painstaking, truth-telling Wilkes summoned Stanley to his duty, and called on Leicester, time after time, to interfere. In vain did Sir John Norris, Sir John Conway, the members of the state-council, and all others who should have had authority, do their utmost to avert a catastrophe. Their hands were all tied by the fatal letter of the 24th November. Most anxiously did all implore the Earl of Leicester to return. Never was a more dangerous moment than this for a country to be left to its fate. Scarcely ever in history was there a more striking exemplification of the need of a man—of an individual—who should embody the powers and wishes, and concentrate in one brain and arm, the whole energy, of a commonwealth. But there was no such man, for the republic had lost its chief when Orange died. There was much wisdom and patriotism now. Olden-Barneveld was competent, and so was Buys, to direct the councils of the republic, and there were few better soldiers than Norris and Hohenlo to lead her armies against Spain. But the supreme authority had been confided to Leicester. He had not perhaps proved himself extraordinarily qualified for his post, but he *was* the governor-in-chief, and his departure, without resigning his powers, left the commonwealth headless, at a moment when singleness of action was vitally important.

At last, very late in January, one Hugh Overing, a haberdasher from Ludgate Hill, was caught at Rotterdam, on his way to Ireland, with a bundle of letters from Sir William Stanley, and was sent, as a suspicious character, to

¹ York to Walsingham. (MS. last cited.)

the state-council at the Hague.¹ On the same day, another Englishman, a small youth, "well-favoured," rejoicing in a "very little red beard, and in very ragged clothes," unknown by name, but ascertained to be in the service of Roland York and to have been the bearer of letters to Brussels, also passed through Rotterdam. By connivance of the innkeeper, one Joyce, also an Englishman, he succeeded in making his escape.² The information contained in the letters thus intercepted was important, but it came too late, even if then the state-council could have acted without giving mortal offence to Elizabeth and to Leicester.

On the evening of 28th January (N. S.), Sir William Stanley entertained the magistrates of Deventer at a splendid banquet. There was free conversation at table concerning the idle suspicions which had been rife in the Provinces as to his good intentions and the censures which had been cast upon him for the repressive measures which he had thought necessary to adopt for the security of the city. He took that occasion to assure his guests that the Queen of England had not a more loyal subject than himself, nor the Netherlands a more devoted friend. The company expressed themselves fully restored to confidence in his character and purposes, and the burgomasters, having exchanged pledges of faith and friendship with the commandant in flowing goblets, went home comfortably to bed, highly pleased with their noble entertainer and with themselves.³

Very late that same night, Stanley placed three hundred of his wild Irish in the Noorenberg tower, a large white structure which commanded the Zutphen gate, and sent bodies $\frac{19}{29}$ Jan. of chosen troops to surprise all the burgher-guards $\frac{1587}{1587}$ at their respective stations. Strong pickets of cavalry were also placed in all the principal thoroughfares of the city. At three o'clock in the following morning he told his officers that he was about to leave Deventer for a few hours, in order to bring in some reinforcements for which he had sent, as he

¹ Conway to Walsingham, 28 Jan. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Ibid.

³ Reynd. vi. 96.

had felt much anxiety for some time past as to the disposition of the burghers. His officers, honest Englishmen, suspecting no evil and having confidence in their chief, saw nothing strange in this proceeding, and Sir William rode deliberately out of Zutphen. After he had been absent an hour or two, the clatter of hoofs and the tramp of infantry was heard without, and presently the commandant returned, followed by a thousand musketeers and three or four hundred troopers. It was still pitch dark ; but, dimly lighted by torches, small detachments of the fresh troops picked their way through the black narrow streets, while the main body poured at once upon the Brink, or great square. Here, quietly and swiftly, they were marshalled into order, the cavalry, pikemen, and musketeers, lining all sides of the place, and a chosen band—among whom stood Sir William Stanley, on foot, and an officer of high rank on horseback—occupying the central space immediately in front of the town-house.¹

The drums then beat, and proclamation went forth through the city that all burghers, without any distinction—municipal guards and all—were to repair forthwith to the city-hall, and deposit their arms. As the inhabitants arose from their slumbers, and sallied forth into the streets to inquire the cause of the disturbance, they soon discovered that they had, in some mysterious manner, been entrapped. Wild Irishmen, with uncouth garb, threatening gesture, and unintelligible jargon, stood gibbering at every corner, instead of the comfortable Flemish faces of the familiar burgher-guard. The chief burgomaster, sleeping heavily after Sir William's hospitable banquet, aroused himself at last, and sent a militia-captain to inquire the cause of the unseasonable drum-beat and monstrous proclamation. Day was breaking as the trusty captain made his way to the scene of action. The wan light of a cold, drizzly January morning showed him the wide, stately square—with its leafless lime-trees and its tall many-storied, gable-ended houses rising dim and spectral through

¹ Bor, II. xxii. 878-879. Reynd. vi. | volgh, 220-221. Le Petit, II. 341.
96-97. Strada, II. 467. Hoofd, Yer- | Wagenaar, viii. 196, seq.

the mist—filled to overflowing with troops, whose uniforms and banners resembled nothing that he remembered in Dutch and English regiments. Fires were lighted at various corners, kettles were boiling, and camp-followers and sutlers were crouching over them, half perished with cold—for it had been raining dismally all night¹—while burghers, with wives and children, startled from their dreams by the sudden reveillée, stood gaping about, with perplexed faces and despairing gestures. As he approached the town-house—one of those magnificent, many-towered, highly-decorated, municipal palaces of the Netherlands—he found troops all around it; troops guarding the main entrance, troops on the great external staircase leading to the front balcony, and officers, in yellow jerkin and black bandoleer, grouped in the balcony itself.

The Flemish captain stood bewildered, when suddenly the familiar form of Stanley detached itself from the central group and advanced towards him. Taking him by the hand with much urbanity, Sir William led the militia-man through two or three ranks of soldiers, and presented him to the strange officer on horseback.²

“Colonel Tassis,” said he, “I recommend to you a very particular friend of mine. Let me bespeak your best offices in his behalf.”

“Ah God!” cried the honest burgher, “Tassis! Tassis! Then are we indeed most miserably betrayed.”³

Even the Spanish colonel, who was of Flemish origin, was affected by the despair of the Netherlander.

“Let those look to the matter of treachery whom it concerns,” said he; “my business here is to serve the King, my master.”

“Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar’s, and unto God the things which are God’s,” said Stanley, with piety.⁴

The burgher-captain was then assured that no harm was intended to the city, but that it now belonged to his most

¹ “Ongeacht dat ze de gantsche nacht gereyst hadden, in seer quaet en kout weder, ende dat het den sel-

ven voormiddags oock reghende,” &c. Revd. vi. 96.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

Catholic Majesty of Spain—Colonel Stanley, to whom its custody had been entrusted, having freely and deliberately restored it to its lawful owner. He was then bid to go and fetch the burgomasters and magistrates.

Presently they appeared—a dismal group, weeping and woe-begone—the same board of strict Calvinists forcibly placed in office but three months before by Leicester, through the agency of this very Stanley, who had so summarily ejected their popish predecessors, and who only the night before had so handsomely feasted themselves. They came forward, the tears running down their cheeks, crying indeed so piteously that even Stanley began to weep bitterly himself. “I have not done this,” he sobbed, “for power or pelf. Not the hope of reward, but the love of God hath moved me.”¹

Presently some of the ex-magistrates made their appearance, and a party of leading citizens went into a private house with Tassis and Stanley to hear statements and explanations—as if any satisfactory ones were possible.

Sir William, still in a melancholy tone, began to make a speech, through an interpreter, and again to protest that he had not been influenced by love of lucre. But as he stammered and grew incoherent as he approached the point, Tassis suddenly interrupted the conference. “Let us look after our soldiers,” said he, “for they have been marching in the foul weather half the night.” So the Spanish troops, who had been standing patiently to be rained upon after their long march, until the burghers had all deposited their arms in the city-hall, were now billeted on the townspeople. Tassis gave

¹ “Sir William Stanley did fetch some of the commons and magistrates to come and welcome Taxis. With weeping tears and sad countenances they gave him reverence, sorry to see themselves so betrayed.

“When Sir William Stanley did see the pitiful state and sorrowful hearts of the burghers, God made him have some feeling of his sins. His own conscience, it seemed, accused him, and he *wept with the burghers for company*, protesting with vehement words

and oaths that he had done it with no covetous mind for profit, but only for the discharge of his conscience. It is now said he hath and shall have 30,000*l*.” Sir John Conway to Walsingham, 28 Jan. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

Compare Reynd, *ubi sup.* Wilkes to Leicester, MS. before cited. Norris to Burghley, ²¹/₃₁ Jan. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

peremptory orders that no injury should be offered to persons or property on pain of death; and, by way of wholesome example, hung several Hibernians the same day who had been detected in plundering the inhabitants.¹

The citizens were, as usual in such cases, offered the choice between embracing the Catholic religion or going into exile, a certain interval being allowed them to wind up their affairs. They were also required to furnish Stanley and his regiment full pay *for the whole period of their service* since coming to the Provinces, and to Tassis three months' wages for his Spaniards in advance.² Stanley offered his troops the privilege of remaining with him in the service of Spain, or of taking their departure unmolested. The Irish troops were quite willing to continue under their old chieftain, particularly as it was intimated to them that there was an immediate prospect of a brisk campaign in their native island against the tyrant Elizabeth, under the liberating banners of Philip. And certainly, in an age where religion constituted country, these fervent Catholics could scarcely be censured for taking arms against the sovereign who persecuted their religion and themselves. These honest barbarians had broken no oath, violated no trust, had never pretended sympathy with freedom or affection for their Queen. They had fought fiercely under the chief who led them into battle—they had robbed and plundered voraciously as opportunity served, and had been occasionally hanged for their exploits; but Deventer and Fort Zutphen had not been confided to their keeping; and it was a pleasant thought to them, that approaching invasion of Ireland.

"I will ruin the whole country from Holland to Friesland," said Stanley to Captain Newton, "and then I will play such

¹ Reynd, *ubi sup.*

² Wilkes to Leicester, 24 Jan. 1587. (N. P. Office MS.)

"From the market-place Taxis and Stanley went to the town-house, whither the woeful magistrates were called and made to welcome Taxis, and were then required with all expedition to furnish and make ready so much money as should pay all the

arrears due to Stanley and his regiment, since their coming into these countries, who had received a month's pay of the States not eight days before he received the enemy into the town. They were also required to furnish and deliver as much more money as might give three months to the troops of the enemy then newly entered."

a game in Ireland as the Queen has never seen the like all the days of her life."¹

Newton had already been solicited by Roland York to take service under Parma, and had indignantly declined. Sir Edmund Carey and his men, four hundred in all, refused, to a man, to take part in the monstrous treason, and were allowed to leave the city.² This was the case with all the English officers. Stanley and York were the only gentlemen who on this occasion sullied the honour of England.

Captain Henchman, who had been taken prisoner in a skirmish a few days before the surrender of Deventer, was now brought to that city, and earnestly entreated by Tassis and by Stanley to seize this opportunity of entering the service of Spain.

"You shall have great advancement and preferment," said Tassis. "His Catholic Majesty has got ready very many ships for Ireland, and *Sir William Stanley is to be general of the expedition.*"

"And you shall choose your own preferment," said Stanley, "for I know you to be a brave man."

"I would rather," replied Henchman, "serve my prince in loyalty as a beggar, than to be known and reported a rich traitor, with breach of conscience."

"Continue so," replied Stanley, unabashed; "for this is the very principle of my own enlargement: for, before, I served the devil, and now I am serving God."

The offers and the arguments of the Spaniard and the renegade were powerless with the blunt captain, and notwithstanding "divers other traitorous alledgements by Sir William for his most vile facts," as Henchman expressed it, that officer

¹ "Que le Colonel Stanley lui a proféré, Je me comporterai tellement que le pays jusqu'en Hollande et entre Wezel et Embden, seront en tout ruiné, dedans six jours; et causerai en Irlande tel jeu de guerre que la Reine n'a vu en sa vie." Examination of Capt. Thomas Newton touching the loss of Deventer, before the Council of State,

² Jan. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ "That he (Lieutenant John Reenan,

in Stanley's service, an earnest man) may deliver to Sir Francis Walsingham some circumstance of the surrendering of Deventer, and what speeches passed from Sir William Stanley touching Ireland, whither he thinks to be sent to work her Majesty some trouble and annoy, if he shall be able." Sir John Norris to F. Walsingham, 29 Jan. 1587. (S. P. Off. MS.)

⁴ Wilkes to Leicester, 24 Jan. (MS. before cited.)

remained in poverty and captivity until such time as he could be exchanged.¹

Stanley subsequently attempted in various ways to defend his character. He had a commission from Leicester, he said, to serve whom he chose—as if the governor-general had contemplated his serving Philip II. with that commission; he had a passport to go whither he liked—as if his passport entitled him to take the city of Deventer along with him; he owed no allegiance to the States; he was discharged from his promise to the Earl; he was his own master; he wanted neither money nor preferment; he had been compelled by his conscience and his duty to God to restore the city to its lawful master, and so on, and so on.²

But whether he owed the States allegiance or not, it is certain that he had accepted their money to relieve himself and his troops eight days before his treason. That Leicester had discharged him from his promises to such an extent as to justify his surrendering a town committed to his honour for safe keeping, certainly deserved no answer; that his duty to conscience required him to restore the city argued a somewhat tardy awakening of that monitor in the breast of the man who three months before had wrested the place with the armed hand from men suspected of Catholic inclinations; that his first motive however was not the mere love of money, was doubtless true. Attachment to his religion, a desire to atone for his sins against it, the insidious temptings of his evil spirit, York,³ who was the chief organizer of the conspiracy, and the

¹ Henry Henchman to Walsingham, 22 March, 1587. (S. P. office MS.) *Totidem verbis*.

² Bor, Reynd, Strada, Hoofd, 'Vervolgh,' Le Petit, Wagenaar, *ubi sup.* Bentivoglio, P. II. l. v. 312. F. Haraei Ann. III. 398. Camden, III. 397-398.

³ According to Camden, York had persuaded Stanley that he had been accused by the conspirators of being engaged in the Babington plot, and that he was "forthwith to be sent into England, to be hanged." Haraeus

(*ubi sup.*) has a slight allusion to the same effect, but I have found no other intimation of this very improbable suspicion with regard to Sir William. The English historian also states that after the treason Stanley called his troops the Seminary regiment of soldiers, to defend the Romish religion by their swords, as the Seminary priests by their writings. Cardinal Allen praised his deed in his famous book, and excited all others to go and do likewise. Camden, B. III. 398.

prospect of gratifying a wild and wicked ambition—these were the springs that moved him. Sums—varying from 30,000*l.* to a pension of 1500 pistolets a year—were mentioned, as the stipulated price of his treason, by Norris, Wilkes, Conway, and others ;¹ but the Duke of Parma, in narrating the whole affair in a private letter to the King, explicitly stated that he had found Stanley “singularly disinterested.”

“The colonel was only actuated by religious motives,” he said, “asking for no reward, except that he might serve in his Majesty’s army thenceforth—and this is worthy to be noted.”²

At the same time it appears from this correspondence, that the Duke recommended, and that the King bestowed, a “merced,” which Stanley did not refuse ;³ and it was very well known that to no persons in the world was Philip apt to be so generous as to men of high rank, Flemish, Walloon, or English, who deserted the cause of his rebellious subjects to serve under his own banners. Yet, strange to relate, almost at the very moment that Stanley was communicating his fatal act of treason, in order that he might open a high career for his ambition, a most brilliant destiny was about to dawn upon him. The Queen had it in contemplation, in recompense for his distinguished services, and by advice of Leicester, to bestow great honors and titles upon him, and to appoint him Viceroy of Ireland—of that very country which he was now proposing, as an enemy to his sovereign and as the purchased tool of a foreign despot, to invade.⁴

¹ MS. Letters before cited. Doyley to Walsingham, 25 March, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² “Que ha sido de nota,” &c. Parma to Philip, 12 Feb. 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

³ Ibid. Compare Bentivoglio, P. II. l. v. 312. “Era Cattolico lo Stanley, e mostrò di farlo per zelo principalmente di Religione,” says the Cardinal, “contucciò ne fu premiato largamente dal Ré, e tanto piu, perche egli tirò seco nel medesimo servitio tutti gli Inglesi ch’ eravano in Deventer,” &c. This last statement we have seen to be entirely a mistake,

Compare Strada, II. 468, 469, who is very emphatic with regard to the purity of Stanley’s motives: “Motum se ad dedendam urbem Stanleus ad-junxit, non largitionibus, aut honorum titulis, proditorum pretiis; *quæ quamvis oblata respuerit* uti aliena à majorum claritudine, vitæque suæ,” &c. The Jesuit adds, that the Duke warmly adjured his sovereign not to allow such disinterestedness to go unrewarded—and it did not.

⁴ This is stated distinctly by Leicester in his letter to the States-General, on first being informed of the surrender of Deventer; “L’affection

Stanley's subsequent fate was obscure. A price of 3000 florins was put by the States upon his head and upon that of York.¹ He went to Spain, and afterwards returned to the Provinces. He was even reported to have become, through the judgment of God, a lunatic,² although the tale wanted confirmation; and it is certain that at the close of the year he had mustered his regiment under Farnese, prepared to join the Duke in the great invasion of England.³

Roland York, who was used to such practices, cheerfully consummated his crime on the same day that witnessed the surrender of Deventer. He rode up to the gates of that city on the morning of the 29th January, inquired quietly whether Tassis was master of the place, and then galloped furiously back the ten miles to his fort. Entering, he called his soldiers together, bade them tear in pieces the colours of England, and follow him into the city of Zutphen.⁴ Two companies of States' troops offered resistance, and attempted to hold the place; but they were overpowered by the English and Irish, assisted by a force of Spaniards, who, by a concerted movement, made their appearance from the town. He received a handsome reward, having far surpassed the Duke of Parma's

et soing qu'ay toujours eu a la conservation de l'estat des provinces unies m'augmentent tant plus de regret qu'ay eu d'entendre la trahison de la ville de Deventer, qu'elle a este forme par la lascheté de celuy auquel S. M. eut voulu confier royaumes entiers et lequell elle pensoit annoblir des plus grands titres avecq recompenses condignes, pour le promouvoir a la dignité de Vice Roy d'Irlande," &c. Leicester to the States-General, ²/₁₂ Feb. 1587. (Hague Archives, MS.)

¹ Bor., II. xxii. 882. Wagenaar, viii. 199.

² "By letters from Deventer, they write that the traitor Stanley groweth frantic—a just punishment of God—and his men very poor and in misery. The other traitor, York, has been seen of late in Antwerp and Brussels, little regarded, whose determination is to go to Spain or Naples, there to

live on his stipend, out of the stir of these wars, fearing that which I hope to God he shall never escape." Captain Ed. Burnham to Walsingham, 7 March, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

"It is bruited that Stanley was now lately become a lunatic, void of government and discretion. . . . If this be true, as he was known for a traitor, so he may be noted for a fool." Lloyd to Walsingham, 16 Oct. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ "Among them, Sir William Stanley was the leader of his companies, 800 or 900 men, the most part Irish and Scotch and the rest English. I heard an Italian captain report that Stanley's companies were the best that they make account of." John Giles to Walsingham, 4 Dec. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Wilkes to Leicester, 24 Jan. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

expectations, when he made his original offer of service. He died very suddenly, after a great banquet at Deventer, in the course of the same year, not having succeeded in making his escape into Spain to live at ease on his stipend. It was supposed that he was poisoned ; but the charge in those days was a common one, and nobody cared to investigate the subject. His body was subsequently exhumed—when Deventer came into the hands of the patriots—and with impotent and contemptible malice hanged upon a gibbet. This was the end of Roland York.¹

Parma was highly gratified, as may be imagined, at such successful results. "Thus Fort Zutphen," said he, "about which there have been so many fisticuffs, and Deventer—which was the real object of the last campaign, and which has cost the English so much blood and money, and is the safety of Groningen and of all those Provinces—is now your Majesty's. Moreover, the effect of this treason must be to sow great distrust between the English and the rebels, who will henceforth never know in whom they can confide."²

Parma was very right in this conjuncture. Moreover, there was just then a fearful run against the States. The castle of Wauw, within a league of Bergen-op-Zoom, which had been entrusted to one Le Marchand, a Frenchman in the service of the republic, was delivered by him to Parma for 16,000 florins. "'Tis a very important post," said the Duke, "and the money was well laid out."³

The loss of the city of Gelder, capital of the Province of the same name, took place in the summer. This town belonged to the jurisdiction of Martin Schenk, and was his chief place of deposit for the large and miscellaneous property acquired by him during his desultory, but most profitable, freebooting career. The famous partisan was then absent, engaged in a lucrative job in the way of his profession. He had made a

¹ Bor, Reyd, Hoofd, Wagenaar, Strada, Bentivoglio, Camden, Le Petit, Haraeus, *locis citatis*. Baker's Chronicle, 385. Meteren, xiv. 245-250. MS. Letters already cited.

² Parma to Philip II. 12 Feb. 1587. (Arch. de Simancas MS.)

³ Ibid. Compare Bor, II. xxii. 878. Strada, II. 466. Wagenaar, vii. 196. Haraeus, III. 397 *et mult. al.*

contract—in a very business-like way—with the States, to defend the city of Rheinberg and all the country round against the Duke of Parma, pledging himself to keep on foot for that purpose an army of 3300 foot and 700 horse. For this extensive and important operation he was to receive 20,000 florins a month from the general exchequer, and in addition he was to be allowed the brandschatz—the black-mail, that is to say—of the whole country-side, and the taxation upon all vessels going up and down the river before Rheinberg; an *ad valorem* duty, in short, upon all river-merchandise, assessed and collected in summary fashion.¹ A tariff thus enforced was not likely to be a mild one; and although the States considered that they had got a “good penny-worth” by the job, it was no easy thing to get the better, in a bargain, of the vigilant Martin, who was as thrifty a speculator as he was a desperate fighter. A more accomplished highwayman, artistically and enthusiastically devoted to his pursuit, never lived. Nobody did his work more thoroughly—nobody got himself better paid for his work—and Thomas Wilkes, that excellent man of business, thought the States not likely to make much by their contract.² Nevertheless, it was a comfort to know that the work would not be neglected.

Schenk was accordingly absent, jobbing the Rheinberg siege, and in his place one Aristotle Patton, a Scotch colonel in the States’ service, was commandant of Gelders. Now the thrifty Scot had an eye to business, too, and was no more troubled with qualms of conscience than Rowland York himself. Moreover, he knew himself to be in great danger of losing his place, for Leicester was no friend to him, and intended to supersede him. Patton had also a decided grudge against Martin Schenk, for that truculent personage had recently administered to him a drubbing, which no doubt he had richly deserved.³ Accordingly, when the Duke of Parma made a

¹ Wilkes to Leicester, 3 Dec. 1586. (S. P. Office M.S.)

² Ibid.

³ Strada, II. 500. Baudartii Polemo-

graphia, II. 90. Compare Wagenaar, viii. 226, who is the authority for the illustrious pagan name of the Scot.

secret offer to him of 36,000 florins if he would quietly surrender the city entrusted to him, the colonel jumped at so excellent an opportunity of circumventing Leicester, feeding his grudge against Martin, and making a handsome fortune for himself. He knew his trade too well, however, to accept the offer too eagerly, and bargained awhile for better terms, and to such good purpose, that it was agreed he should have not only the 36,000 florins, but all the horses, arms, plate, furniture, and other moveables in the city belonging to Schenk, that he could lay his hands upon. Here were revenge and solid damages for the unforgotten assault and battery—for Schenk's property alone made no inconsiderable fortune—and accordingly the city, towards Midsummer, was surrendered to the Seigneur d'Haultepenne.¹ Moreover, the excellent Patton had another and a loftier motive. He was in love. He had also a rival. The lady of his thoughts was the widow of Pontus de Noyelle, Seigneur de Bours, who had once saved the citadel of Antwerp, and afterwards sold that city and himself. His rival was no other than the great Seigneur de Champagny, brother of Cardinal Granvelle, eminent as soldier, diplomatist, and financier, but now growing old, not in affluent circumstances, and much troubled with the gout. Madame de Bours had, however, accepted his hand, and had fixed the day for the wedding, when the Scotchman, thus suddenly enriched, renewed a previously unsuccessful suit. The widow then, partially keeping her promise, actually celebrated her nuptials on the appointed evening; but, to the surprise of the Provinces, she became not the *haulte et puissante dame de Champagny*, but Mrs. Aristotle Patton.²

For this last treason neither Leicester nor the English were responsible. Patton was not only a Scot, but a follower of Hohenlo, as Leicester loudly protested.³ Le Marchant was a

¹ Ibid. Leicester to Walsingham, 4 July, 4 Aug. 1587. Lloyd to Walsingham, 3 July, 1587. (S. P. Office MSS.) But Strada states that the plate and other property were reserved to the Spanish government.

² Baudart, *ubi sup.* Le Petit, II. 346-347.

³ "It is so that Gelders is lost, given up by Paton, the Scotchman, and commanded thither by the Count Hollock, and hath been wholly at his direction

Frenchman. But Deventer and Zutphen were places of vital importance, and Stanley an Englishman of highest consideration, one who had been deemed worthy of the command in chief in Leicester's absence. Moreover, a cornet in the service of the Earl's nephew, Sir Robert Sidney, had been seen at Zutphen in conference with Tassis; and the horrible suspicion went abroad that even the illustrious name of Sidney was to be polluted also.¹ This fear was fortunately false, although the cornet was unquestionably a traitor, with whom the enemy had been tampering; but the mere thought that Sir Robert Sidney could betray the trust reposed in him was almost enough to make the still unburied corpse of his brother arise from the dead.

Parma was right when he said that all confidence of the Netherlanders in the Englishmen would now be gone, and that the Provinces would begin to doubt their best friends. No fresh treasons followed, but they were expected every day. An organized plot to betray the country was believed in, and a howl of execration swept through the land. The noble deeds of Sidney and Willoughby, and Norris and Pelham, and Roger Williams, the honest and valuable services of Wilkes, the generosity and courage of Leicester, were for a season forgotten. The English were denounced in every city and village of the Netherlands as traitors and miscreants. Respectable English merchants went from hostelry to hostelry, and from town to town, and were refused a lodging for love or money. The nation was put under ban.² A most melancholy change from the beginning of the year, when the very men who were now loudest in denunciation and fiercest in hate, had been the warmest friends of Elizabeth, of England, and of Leicester.

and commandment. Yet for the good nature of Norris and Wilkes, so soon as they heard of this, reported to the States that this Patton was a colonel of my preferment to make the people to hate me," &c. Leicester to Walsingham, 2 July, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

It will be perceived that this occurrence has been placed in juxtaposition with similar occurrences in the narra-

tive, although a few months removed from them in chronological sequence.

¹ Examination of Newton. MS. before cited. Compare Meteren, xiv. 249-250. Reynd, vi. 97-98.

² Wilkes to Hatton, 24 Jan. 1587. Memorial given to Sir Roger Williams, Feb. 1587. Wilkes to the Queen, 16 Feb. 1587. (S. P. Office MSS.)

At Hohenlo's table the opinion was loudly expressed, even in the presence of Sir Roger Williams, that it was highly improbable, if a man like Stanley, of such high rank in the kingdom of England, of such great connections and large means, could commit such a treason, that he could do so without the knowledge and consent of her Majesty.¹

Barneveld, in council of state, declared that Leicester, by his restrictive letter of 24th November, had intended to carry the authority over the republic into England, in order to dispose of everything at his pleasure, in conjunction with the English cabinet-council, and that the country had never been so cheated by the French as it had now been by the English, and that their government had become insupportable.²

Councillor Carl Roorda maintained at the table of Elector Truchsess that the country had fallen *de tyrannide in tyrannidem*, and—if they had spurned the oppression of the Spaniards and the French—that it was now time to rebel against the English. Barneveld and Buys loudly declared that the Provinces were able to protect themselves without foreign assistance, and that it was very injurious to impress a contrary opinion upon the public mind.³

The whole college of the States-General came before the state-council, and demanded the name of the man to whom the Earl's restrictive letter had been delivered—that document by which the governor had dared surreptitiously to annul the authority which publicly he had delegated to that body, and thus to deprive it of the power of preventing anticipated crimes. After much colloquy the name of Brackel was given, and, had not the culprit fortunately been absent, his life might have been in danger, for rarely had grave statesmen been so thoroughly infuriated.⁴

No language can exaggerate the consequences of this

¹ Abuses offered to her Majesty and his Excellency and the whole English nation by the States and others. April, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.) Sir J. Norris to Walsingham, 25 March, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Ibid.

³ Ibid. Compare Strada, II. 469; Bentivoglio, P. II. l. iv. 312-313; Bor, II. xxii. 883; Wagenaar, viii. 199; *et mult. al.*

⁴ Wilkes to Leicester, 24 Jan. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

wretched treason. Unfortunately, too, the abject condition to which the English troops had been reduced by the niggardliness of their sovereign was an additional cause of danger. Leicester was gone, and since her favourite was no longer in the Netherlands, the Queen seemed to forget that there was a single Englishman upon that fatal soil. In *five months not one penny* had been sent to her troops. While the Earl had been there one hundred and forty thousand pounds had been sent in seven or eight months. After his departure not five thousand pounds were sent in one half year.¹

The English soldiers, who had fought so well in every Flemish battle-field of freedom, had become—such as were left of them—mere famishing half naked vagabonds and marauders. Brave soldiers had been changed by their sovereign into brigands, and now the universal odium which suddenly attached itself to the English name converted them into outcasts. Forlorn and crippled creatures swarmed about the Provinces, but were forbidden to come through the towns, and so wandered about, robbing hen-roosts and pillaging the peasantry.² Many deserted to the enemy. Many begged their way to England, and even to the very gates of the palace, and exhibited their wounds and their misery before the eyes of that good Queen Bess who claimed to be the mother of her subjects,—and begged for bread in vain.³

The English cavalry, dwindled now to a body of five hundred, starving and mutinous, made a foray into Holland, rather as highwaymen than soldiers. Count Maurice commanded their instant departure, and Hohenlo swore that if the order were not instantly obeyed, he would put himself at the head of his troops and cut every man of them to pieces.⁴ A most painful and humiliating condition for brave men who had been fighting the battles of their Queen and of the republic, to behold themselves—through the parsimony of the one and

¹ J. Norris to Walsingham, 25 March, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Wilkes to the Queen, 16 Feb. 1587. Same to Walsingham, 19 Jan. 1587. (S. P. Office MSS.)

³ Memorial (in Burghley's hand) of things to be declared, Nov. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Wilkes to Leicester, 12 March 1587. (MS.)

the infuriated sentiment of the other—compelled to starve, to rob, or to be massacred by those whom they had left their homes to defend !

At last, honest Wilkes, ever watchful of his duty, succeeded in borrowing eight hundred pounds sterling for two months, by “pawning his own carcass” as he expressed himself. This gave the troopers about thirty shillings a man, with which relief they became, for a time, contented and well disposed.¹

¹ Wilkes to Leicester, 12 March, 1587. (MS.) “So great is the lack of discipline among the garrisons,” wrote Wilkes, “especially of our nation, that I am ashamed to hear the continual complaints which come to this council against them. And albeit Sir John Norris and I have written often unto the captains and governors to see reformation had of the insolences and disorders of their soldiers within the towns, it is notwithstanding so slenderly respected as there followeth no amendment at all; so as we begin to grow as hateful to the people as the Spaniard himself, who governeth his towns of conquest with a milder hand than we do our friends and allies. The causes hereof we find to be two. The one is for lack of pay, without which it is impossible to preserve discipline among the soldiers, and most of the troops in her Majesty’s pay (excepting the garrisons of Brill and Flushing) have not been paid from the beginning of September last, being now about five months. The other is lack of government in the captains and officers, who for the most part are either such as never served before, and have no judgment—no note to rule themselves, and such as make their profit of the poor soldiers so extremely as they are hateful to the companies, wherein if there is no redress, it were better her Majesty did revoke all; for as the case of the common soldier now standeth the States receive little or no service of them but spoil and ruin of their towns and countries.” Wilkes to Walsingham, 19 Jan. 1587. (MS.)

And again he writes to the Queen, about “the weakness and confusion to which her troops are reduced for want of pay, having received nothing from 1 Sept. to that day” (16 Feb). “The

captains of the horsemen,” he says, “are all in England, and thereby the most of the companies evil led and governed, committing daily upon the villages and people extreme spoils, insolences, and mischiefs, which, together with the example of the late treasons of Stanley and York, hath drawn our nation into the hatred of this people very deeply, so as they are for the most part turned out of the towns, and refused to be taken into garrison. The horsemen, destitute of money and food, are, without order, entered now into Holland (an unfit place for their abode), where the people are risen against them, and they to the number of 500 or 600, in terms either themselves to do mischief, or themselves to be cut in pieces by the country—a case very lamentable to us that feel the grief of so hard a choice, and can find almost no way to prevent the peril. I have urged the States by earnest letters (myself being at this present sick, by God’s visitation, to the danger of my life) to take some order to relieve your people in this distress, myself offering my carcass in pawn, to answer as much as they shall eat, after a certain rate. I find them reasonably inclined, yet affected by two impediments—a strange jealousy, by them conceived of all our nation; the other their own want. . . . The confusions are wonderful that are grown in this State in the absence of my Lord of Leicester, which hath opened many gaps to disorder,” &c. Wilkes to the Queen, 16 Feb. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

And once more he writes, “I saw no remedy for them but to engage myself for some means to feed them until other order might be taken, whereupon with the help of mine own

Is this picture exaggerated? Is it drawn by pencils hostile to the English nation or the English Queen? It is her own generals and confidential counsellors who have told a story in all its painful details, which has hardly found a place in other chronicles. The parsimony of the great Queen must ever remain a blemish on her character, and it was never more painfully exhibited than towards her brave soldiers in Flanders in the year 1587. Thomas Wilkes, a man of truth, and a man of accounts, had informed Elizabeth that the expenses of one year's war, since Leicester had been governor-general, had amounted to exactly five hundred and seventy-nine thousand three hundred and sixty pounds and nineteen shillings, of which sum one hundred and forty-six thousand three hundred and eighty-six pounds and eleven shillings had been spent by her Majesty, and the balance had been paid, or was partly owing by the States.¹ These were not agreeable figures, but the figures of honest accountants rarely flatter, and Wilkes was not one of those financiers who have the wish or the gift to make things pleasant. He had transmitted the accounts just as they had been delivered, certified by the treasurers of the States and by the English paymasters, and the Queen was appalled at the sum-totals. She could never proceed with such a war as that, she said, and she declined a loan of sixty thousand pounds which the States requested, besides stoutly refusing to advance her darling Robin a penny to pay off the mortgages upon two-thirds of his estates, on which the equity of redemption was fast expiring, or to give him the slightest help in furnishing him forth anew for the wars.

Yet not one of her statesmen doubted that these Netherland battles were English battles, almost as much as if the fighting-ground had been the Isle of Wight or the coast of Kent, the

credit, and pawn of my own carcase, to repay at the end of two months 800*l.* which I divided among the companies distressed, being eight in number, which extended to thirty shillings

a man," &c. Wilkes to Leicester, 12 March, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

¹ Wilkes to Walsingham, 12 Jan. 1587. Same to Burghley, 12 Jan. 1587. (S. P. Office MSS.)

charts of which the statesmen and generals of Spain were daily conning.

Wilkes, too, while defending Leicester stoutly behind his back, doing his best to explain his short-comings, lauding his courage and generosity, and advocating his beloved theory of popular sovereignty with much ingenuity and eloquence, had told him the truth to his face. Although assuring him that if he came back soon, he might rule the States "as a school-master doth his boys,"¹ he did not fail to set before him the disastrous effects of his sudden departure and of his protracted absence; he had painted in darkest colours the results of the Deventer treason, he had unveiled the cabals against his authority, he had repeatedly and vehemently implored his return; he had informed the Queen, that notwithstanding some errors of administration, he was much the fittest man to represent her in the Netherlands, and that he could accomplish, by reason of his experience, more in three months than any other man could do in a year. He had done his best to reconcile the feuds which existed between him and important personages in the Netherlands, he had been the author of the complimentary letters sent to him in the name of the States-General—to the great satisfaction of the Queen—but he had not given up his friendship with Sir John Norris, because he said "the virtues of the man made him as worthy of love as any one living, and because the more he knew him, the more he had cause to affect and to admire him."²

This was the unpardonable offence, and for this, and for having told the truth about the accounts, Leicester denounced Wilkes to the Queen as a traitor and a hypocrite, and threatened repeatedly to take his life. He had even the meanness to prejudice Burghley against him—by insinuating to the Lord-Treasurer that he too had been maligned by Wilkes—and thus most effectually damaged the character of the plain-spoken councillor with the Queen and many of

¹ Wilkes to Walsingham, 17 Feb. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Ibid. Same to the Queen, 16 Feb.

1587. Same to Walsingham, 17 May, 1587. (S. P. Office MSS.)

her advisers; notwithstanding that he plaintively besought her to "allow him to reiterate his sorry song, as doth the cuckoo, that she would please not condemn her poor servant unheard."¹

Immediate action was taken on the Deventer treason, and on the general relations between the States-General and the English government. Barneveld immediately drew up a severe letter to the Earl of Leicester. On the 2nd February Wilkes came by chance into the assembly of the States-General, with the rest of the councillors, and found Barneveld just demanding the public reading of that document. The letter was read. Wilkes then rose and made a few remarks.

"The letter seems rather sharp upon his Excellency," he observed. "There is not a word in it," answered Barneveld curtly, "that is not perfectly true;" and with this he cut the matter short, and made a long speech upon other matters which were then before the assembly.

Wilkes, very anxious as to the effect of the letter, both upon public feeling in England and upon his own position as English councillor, waited immediately upon Count Maurice, President van der Myle, and upon Villiers the clergyman, and implored their interposition to prevent the transmission of the epistle. They promised to make an effort to delay its despatch or to mitigate its tone. A fortnight afterwards, however, Wilkes learned with dismay, that the document (the leading passages of which will be given hereafter) had been sent to its destination.²

Meantime, a consultation of civilians and of the family council of Count Maurice was held, and it was determined that the Count should assume the title of Prince more formally than he had hitherto done,³ in order that the actual head of the Nassaus might be superior in rank to Leicester or to any

¹ Wilkes to the Queen, 8 Feb. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Wilkes to Walsingham, 17 May, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

Compare Wagenaar, viii. 201, who states that the famous 4th of February letter was read and approved by

Wilkes. This is an error, as appears in the narrative given in the text from the MS. letter-book of Wilkes.

³ Memorial given by Wilkes to Sir R. Williams, Feb. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.) Compare *Le Petit*, II. xiv. 541. Wagenaar, viii. 203-204.

man who could be sent from England. Maurice was also appointed by the States, provisionally, governor-general, with Hohenlo for his lieutenant-general.¹ That formidable personage, now fully restored to health, made himself very busy in securing towns and garrisons for the party of Holland, and in cashiering all functionaries suspected of English tendencies. Especially he became most intimate with Count Moeurs, stadholder of Utrecht—the hatred of which individual and his wife towards Leicester and the English nation, springing originally from the unfortunate babble of Otheman, had grown more intense than ever,—“banquetting and feasting” with him all day long, and concocting a scheme, by which, for certain considerations, the province of Utrecht was to be annexed to Holland under the perpetual stadholderate of Prince Maurice.

¹ Meteren, xiv. 250. Wagenaar, viii. 204. Reyd, vi. 100.

CHAPTER XIV.

Leicester in England—Trial of the Queen of Scots—Fearful Perplexity at the English Court—Infatuation and Obstinacy of the Queen—Netherland Envoys in England—Queen's bitter Invective against them—Amazement of the Envoys—They consult with her chief Councillors—Remarks of Burghley and Davison—Fourth of February Letter from the States—Its severe Language towards Leicester—Painful Position of the Envoys at Court—Queen's Parsimony towards Leicester.

THE scene shifts, for a brief interval, to England. Leicester had reached the court late in November. Those "blessed beams," under whose shade he was wont to find so much "refreshment and nutrition," had again fallen with full radiance upon him. "Never since I was born," said he, "did I receive a more gracious welcome."¹ Alas, there was not so much benignity for the starving English soldiers, nor for the Provinces, which were fast growing desperate; but although their cause was so intimately connected with the "great cause," which then occupied Elizabeth, almost to the exclusion of other matter, it was, perhaps, not wonderful, although unfortunate, that for a time the Netherlands should be neglected.

The "daughter of debate" had at last brought herself, it was supposed, within the letter of the law, and now began those odious scenes of hypocrisy on the part of Elizabeth, that frightful comedy—more melancholy even than the solemn tragedy which it preceded and followed—which must ever remain the darkest passage in the history of the Queen. It is unnecessary, in these pages, to make more than a passing allusion to the condemnation and death of the Queen of Scots. Who doubts her participation in the Babington conspiracy? Who doubts that she was the centre of one endless

¹ Leicester to Wilkes, 4 Dec. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

conspiracy by Spain and Rome against the throne and life of Elizabeth? Who doubts that her long imprisonment in England was a violation of all law, all justice, all humanity? Who doubts that the fineing, whipping, torturing, hanging, embowelling of men, women, and children, guilty of no other crime than adhesion to the Catholic faith, had assisted the Pope and Philip, and their band of English, Scotch, and Irish conspirators, to shake Elizabeth's throne and endanger her life? Who doubts that, had the English sovereign been capable of conceiving the great thought of religious toleration, her reign would have been more glorious than it was, the cause of Protestantism and freedom more triumphant, the name of Elizabeth Tudor dearer to human hearts? Who doubts that there were many enlightened and noble spirits among her Protestant subjects who lifted up their voices, over and over again, in parliament and out of it, to denounce that wicked persecution exercised upon their innocent Catholic brethren, which was fast converting loyal Englishmen, against their will, into traitors and conspirators? Yet who doubts that it would have required, at exactly that moment, and in the midst of that crisis, more elevation of soul than could fairly be predicated of any individual, for Elizabeth in 1587 to pardon Mary, or to relax in the severity of her legislation towards English Papists?

Yet, although a display of sublime virtue, such as the world has rarely seen, was not to be expected, it was reasonable to look for honest and royal dealing, from a great sovereign, brought at last face to face with a great event. The "great cause" demanded a great, straightforward blow. It was obvious, however, that it would be difficult, in the midst of the tragedy and the comedy, for the Nethetland business to come fairly before her Majesty. "Touching the Low Country causes," said Leicester, "very little is done yet, by reason of the continued business we have had about the Queen of Scots' matters. All the speech I have had with her Majesty hitherto touching those causes hath been but private."¹

¹ Leicester to Wilkes, 4 Dec. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

Walsingham, longing for retirement, not only on account of "his infinite grief for the death of Sir Philip Sidney, which hath been the cause," he said, "that I have ever since betaken myself into solitariness, and withdrawn from public affairs," but also by reason of the perverseness and difficulty manifested in the gravest affairs by the sovereign he so faithfully served, sent information, that, notwithstanding the arrival of some of the States' deputies, Leicester was persuading her Majesty to proceed first in the great cause. "Certain principal persons, chosen as committees," he said, "of both Houses are sent as humble suitors to her Majesty to desire that she would be pleased to give order for the execution of the Scottish Queen. Her Majesty made answer that she was loath to proceed in so violent a course against the said Queen, as the taking away of her life, and therefore prayed them to think of some other way which might be for her own and their safety. They replied, no other way but her execution. Her Majesty, though she yielded no answer to this their latter reply, is contented to give order that the proclamation be published, and so also it is hoped that she will be moved by this their earnest instance to proceed to the thorough ending of the cause."¹

And so the cause went slowly on to its thorough ending. And when "no other way" could be thought of but to take Mary's life, and when "no other way" of taking that life could be "devised," at Elizabeth's suggestion, except by public execution, when none of the gentlemen "of the association," nor Paulet, nor Drury—how skilfully soever their "pulses had been felt"² by Elizabeth's command—would commit assassination to serve a Queen who was capable of punishing them afterwards for the murder, the great cause came to its inevitable conclusion, and Mary Stuart was executed by command of Elizabeth Tudor. The world may continue to differ as to the necessity of the execution, but it has long since pronounced a unanimous verdict as to

¹ Walsingham to Wilkes, 3 Dec. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Davison, in Camden, iii. 393.

the respective display of royal dignity by the two Queens upon that great occasion.

During this interval the Netherland matter, almost as vital to England as the execution of Mary, was comparatively neglected. It was not absolutely in abeyance, but the condition of the Queen's mind coloured every state-affair with its tragic hues. Elizabeth, harassed, anxious, dreaming dreams, and enacting a horrible masquerade, was in the worst possible temper to be approached by the envoys. She was furious with the Netherlanders for having maltreated her favourite. She was still more furious because their war was costing so much money. Her disposition became so uncertain, her temper so ungovernable, as to drive her counsellors to their wit's ends. Burghley confessed himself "weary of his miserable life," and protested "that the only desire he had in the world was to be delivered from the ungrateful burthen of service, which her Majesty laid upon him so very heavily."¹ Walsingham wished himself "well established in Basle."² The Queen set them all together by the ears. She wrangled spitefully over the sum-totals from the Netherlands; she worried Leicester, she scolded Burghley for defending Leicester, and Leicester abused Burghley for taking part against him.³

¹ Burghley to Leicester, 7 Feb. 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, C. xi. 252. MS.)

² Walsingham to Wilkes, 2 May, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Burghley to Leicester. (MS. before cited.)

"Your Lordship is greatly offended," said the Lord Treasurer, "for my speeches in her Majesty's presence. What you conceive, my good Lord, is best known to yourself; what I meant is best known to me; and I do avow in the presence of God that I no more meant to offend you in any thing I spoke, than I meant to offend the best and dearest friend I can imagine in England. And yet her Majesty many times chargeth me that I conceit, I flatter, I dare not speak anything that you should mislike. I see my hard fortune continueth to be subject to

your doubtful opinion, howsoever I do behave myself. . . . You believe me to have moved her Majesty to be offended with you for lack of your procuring a more certainty of the expenses and accounts of the last year's charges on the States behalf. . . . But I never did say, nor mean to say, that your Lordship ought to be blamed for those accounts; for I did say, and do still say, that their accounts are obscure, confused, and without credit. . . . I say that they ought to have been commanded by your authority to have reformed the same, and made your Lordship more privy to their doings. For not doing so I condemned them, and not your Lordship, who had so often complained that you were not better obeyed by them in those points. And so your Lordship did fully answer

The Lord-Treasurer, overcome with "grief which pierced both his body and his heart," battled his way—as best he could—through the throng of dangers which beset the path of England in that great crisis. It was most obvious to every statesman in the realm that this was not the time—when the gauntlet had been thrown full in the face of Philip and Sixtus and all catholicism, by the condemnation of Mary—to leave the Netherland cause "at random," and these outer bulwarks of her own kingdom insufficiently protected.

"Your Majesty will hear," wrote Parma to Philip, "of the disastrous, lamentable, and pitiful end of the poor Queen of Scots. Although for her it will be immortal glory, and she will be placed among the number of the many martyrs whose blood has been shed in the kingdom of England, and be crowned in Heaven with a diadem more precious than the one she wore on earth, nevertheless one cannot repress one's natural emotions. I believe firmly that this cruel deed will be the concluding crime of the many which that Englishwoman has committed, and that our Lord will be pleased that she shall at last receive the chastisement which she has these many long years deserved, and which has been reserved till now, for her greater ruin and confusion."¹ And with this, the Duke proceeded to discuss the all important and rapidly-preparing invasion of England. Farnese was not the man to be deceived by the affected reluctance of Elizabeth before Mary's scaffold, although he was soon to show that he was himself a master in the science of grimace. For Elizabeth—

my speeches, and I also did affirm the same by often repetition to her Majesty that both in that as in many other things, the States had grossly and most rudely encountered your Lordship. And although her Majesty was disposed to leave the cause unrelieved, persisting on her misliking of the accounts, and so to take occasion to deny their requests, yet I trust that your Lordship and the rest did see how earnest I was to draw her Majesty from these reckonings of expenses, and to take regard to the cause which *I said and do say may not now be left at*

random for respect to any charges. I do persist in the opinion that her Majesty may not abandon the cause without manifest injury to her state, as the case and time now forceth her. . . . Your Lordship hath seen and heard her tax me very sharply, that in not applauding to her censure, I do commonly flatter you and that I do against my conscience hold opinions to please you—a very hard case held against me."

¹ Parma to Philip II., 22 March. 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

more than ever disposed to be friends with Spain and Rome, now that war to the knife was made inevitable—was wistfully regarding that trap of negotiation, against which all her best friends were endeavouring to warn her. She was more ill-natured than ever to the Provinces, she turned her back upon the Béarnese, she affronted Henry III. by affecting to believe in the fable of his envoy's complicity in the Stafford conspiracy against her life.¹

"I pray God to open her eyes," said Walsingham, "to see the evident peril of the course she now holdeth. . . . If it had pleased her to have followed the advice given her touching the French ambassador, our ships had been released . . . but she has taken a very strange course by writing a very sharp letter unto the French King, which I fear will cause him to give ear to those of the League, and make himself a party with them, seeing so little regard had to him here. Your Lordship may see that our courage doth greatly increase, for that we make no difficulty to fall out with all the world. . . . I never saw her worse affected to the poor King of Navarre, and yet doth she seek in no sort to yield contentment to the French King. If to offend all the world," repeated the Secretary bitterly, "be a good cause of government, then can we not do amiss. . . . I never found her less disposed to take a course of prevention of the approaching mischiefs toward this realm than at this present. And to be plain with you, there is none here that hath either credit or courage to deal effectually with her in any of her great causes."²

Thus distracted by doubts and dangers, at war with her best friends, with herself, and with all the world, was Elizabeth during the dark days and months which preceded and followed the execution of the Scottish Queen. If the great fight was at last to be fought triumphantly through, it was obvious that England was to depend upon Englishmen of all ranks and

¹ "Declaration of the Negotiations with the French Ambassador, l'Aubepine, at the Lord Treasurer's house," 12 Jan. 1587, in Murdin, 579-583. Compare Mignet, 'Hist. de Marie

Stuart,' 3rd edition, II. 344, *see*

² Walsingham to Leicester, 8 April, 1587. Same to Same, 10 April 1587, (Brit. Mus. Galba, C. xi. 319-321. MSS.)

classes, upon her prudent and far-seeing statesmen, upon her nobles and her adventurers, on her Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman blood ever mounting against oppression, on Howard and Essex, Drake and Williams, Norris and Willoughby, upon high-born magnates, plebeian captains, London merchants, upon yeomen whose limbs were made in England, and upon Hollanders and Zeelanders whose fearless mariners were to swarm to the protection of her coasts, quite as much in that year of anxious expectation as upon the great Queen herself. Unquestionable as were her mental capacity and her more than woman's courage, when fairly brought face to face with the danger, it was fortunately not on one man or woman's brain and arm that England's salvation depended in that crisis of her fate.

As to the Provinces, no one ventured to speak very boldly in their defence. "When I lay before her the peril," said Walsingham, "she scorneth at it. The hope of a peace with Spain has put her into a most dangerous security."¹ Nor would any man now assume responsibility. The fate of Davison—of the man who had already in so detestable a manner been made the scape-goat for Leicester's sins in the Netherlands, and who had now been so barbarously sacrificed by the Queen for faithfully obeying her orders in regard to the death-warrant, had sickened all courtiers and counsellors for the time. "The late severe dealing used by her Highness towards Mr. Secretary Davison," said Walsingham to Wilkes, "maketh us very circumspect and careful not to proceed in anything but wherein we receive direction from herself, and therefore you must not find it strange if we now be more sparing than heretofore hath been accustomed."²

Such being the portentous state of the political atmosphere, and such the stormy condition of the royal mind, it may be supposed that the interviews of the Netherland envoys with her Majesty during this period were not likely to be genial. Exactly at the most gloomy

28 Jan. (O. S.)
7 Feb. (N. S.)
1587.

¹ Walsingham to Leicester, &c., MS. last cited.

² Walsingham to Wilkes, 13 April, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

moment—thirteen days before the execution of Mary—they came first into Elizabeth's presence at Greenwich.¹

The envoys were five in number, all of them experienced and able statesmen—Zuylen van Nyvelt, Joos de Menyn, Nicasius de Silla, Jacob Valck, and Vitus van Kamminga.² The Queen was in the privy council-chamber, attended by the admiral of England, Lord Thomas Howard, Lord Hunadon, great-chamberlain, Sir Christopher Hatton, vice-chamberlain, Secretary Davison, and many other persons of distinction.

The letters of credence were duly presented, but it was obvious from the beginning of the interview that the Queen was ill-disposed toward the deputies, and had not only been misinformed as to matters of fact, but as to the state of feeling of the Netherlanders and of the States-General towards herself.³

Menyn, however, who was an orator by profession—being pensionary of Dort—made, in the name of his colleagues, a brief but pregnant speech, to which the Queen listened attentively, although with frequent indications of anger and impatience. He commenced by observing that the United Provinces still entertained the hope that her Majesty would conclude, upon further thoughts, to accept the sovereignty over them, with *reasonable conditions*; but the most important passages of his address were those relating to the cost of the war. "Besides our stipulated contributions," said the pensionary, "of 200,000 florins the month, we have furnished 500,000 as an extraordinary grant; making for the year 2,900,000 florins, and *this over and above* the particular and special expenditures of the Provinces, and other sums for military purposes. We confess, Madam, that the succour of your Majesty is a truly royal one, and that there have been few princes in history who have given such assistance to their neighbours unjustly oppressed. It is certain that by means of

¹ Brief van de Gedeputeerden uit England, ⁹ Feb. 1587. (Hague Arch., MS.) Compare Bor, II. xxii. 872, *seq.* Wagenaar, viii. 214, *seq.*

² Menyn was pensionary of Dort;

Silla, pensionary of Amsterdam; Valck member of the state-council. Wagenaar, viii. 192.

³ Letter of the Deputies last cited (Hague Archives, MS.)

that help, joined with the forces of the United Provinces, the Earl of Leicester has been able to arrest the course of the Duke of Parma's victories and to counteract his designs. Nevertheless, it appears, Madam, that these forces have not been sufficient to drive the enemy out of the country. We are obliged, for regular garrison work and defence of cities, to keep up an army of at least 27,000 foot and 3500 horse. Of this number your Majesty pays 5000 foot and 1000 horse, and we are now commissioned, Madam, humbly to request an increase of your regular succour during the war to 10,000 foot and 2000 horse. We also implore the loan of 60,000*l.* sterling, in order to assist us in maintaining for the coming season a sufficient force in the field."¹

Such, in brief, was the oration of pensionary Menyn, delivered in the French language. He had scarcely concluded, when the Queen—evidently in a great passion²—rose to her feet, and without any hesitation, replied in a strain of vehement eloquence in the same tongue.

"Now I am not deceived, gentlemen," she said, "and that which I have been fearing has occurred. Our common adage, which we have in England, is a very good one. When one fears that an evil is coming, the sooner it arrives the better. Here is a quarter of a year that I have been expecting you, and certainly for the great benefit I have conferred on you, you have exhibited a great ingratitude, and I consider myself very ill treated by you. 'Tis very strange that you should begin by soliciting still greater succour without rendering me any satisfaction for your past actions, which have been so extraordinary, that I swear by the living God I think it impossible to find peoples or states more ungrateful or ill-advised than yourselves.

I have sent you this year fifteen, sixteen, aye seventeen or eighteen thousand men. You have left them without payment, you have let some of them die of hunger, driven others to such desperation that they have deserted to the

¹ Discours de Menin—Audience à Greenwich. (Hague Arch. MS.)

² "Zeer gealtereert," MS. Letter, *ubi sup.*

enemy. Is it not mortifying for the English nation and a great shame for you that Englishmen should say that they have found more courtesy from Spaniards than from Netherlanders? Truly, I tell you frankly that I will never endure such indignities. Rather will I act according to my will, and you may do exactly as you think best.

"If I chose, I could do something very good without you, although some persons are so fond of saying that it was quite necessary for the Queen of England to do what she does for her own protection. No, no! Disabuse yourselves of that impression. These are but false persuasions. Believe boldly that I can play an excellent game without your assistance, and a better one than I ever did with it.¹ Nevertheless, I do not choose to do that, nor do I wish you so much harm. But likewise do I not choose that you should hold such language to me. It is true that I should not wish the Spaniard so near me if he should be my enemy. But why should I not live in peace, if we were to be friends to each other? At the commencement of my reign we lived honourably together, the King of Spain and I, and he even asked me to marry him, and, after that, we lived a long time very peacefully, without any attempt having been made against my life. If we both choose, we can continue so to do.

"On the other hand, I sent you the Earl of Leicester, as lieutenant of my forces, and my intention was that he should have exact knowledge of your finances and contributions. But, on the contrary, he has never known anything about them, and you have handled them in your own manner and amongst yourselves. You have given him the title of governor, in order, under this name, to cast all your evils on his head. That title he accepted against my will, by doing which he ran the risk of *losing his life*, and his estates, and the grace and favour of his Princess, which was more important to him than all. But he did it in order to maintain your tottering state. And what authority, I pray you, have you given him?

¹ "Que je feroys bien un bon parti sans vous y appeller, et meilleur que je nay faict oncques avecq vous." 'Re-

ponse de Sa Majesté au Discours de Sr de Menin.' (Hague Archives, MS.)

A shadowy authority, a purely imaginary one. This is but mockery. He is, at any rate, a gentleman, a man of honour and of counsel. You had no right to treat him thus. If I had accepted the title which you wished to give me, by the living God, I would not have suffered you so to treat me.

"But you are so badly advised that when there is a man of worth who discovers your tricks you wish him ill, and make an outcry against him ; and yet some of you, in order to save your money, and others in the hope of bribes, have been favouring the Spaniard, and doing very wicked work. No, believe me that God will punish those who for so great a benefit wish to return me so much evil. Believe, boldly too, that the King of Spain will never trust men who have abandoned the party to which they belonged, and from which they have received so many benefits, and will never believe a word of what they promise him. Yet, in order to cover up their filth, they spread the story that the Queen of England is thinking of treating for peace without their knowledge. No, I would rather be dead than that any one should have occasion to say that I had not kept my promise. But princes must listen to both sides, and that can be done without breach of faith.¹ For they transact business in a certain way, and with a princely intelligence, such as private persons cannot imitate.²

"You are States, to be sure, but private individuals in regard to princes. Certainly, I would never choose to do anything without your knowledge, and I would never allow the authority which you have among yourselves, nor your privileges, nor your statutes, to be infringed. Nor will I allow you to be perturbed in your consciences. What then would you more of me? You have issued a proclamation in your country that no one is to talk of peace. Very well, very good. But permit princes likewise to do as they shall think

¹ "Et encores que les princes oyent aulcunes fois l'ung et l'autre, cela se peult faire sans" There is a broken sentence here in the original, which seems to require a phrase similar to the one which I have supplied.

'Repense,' &c., just cited.

² "Car ils besoignent avecq une maniere, de faire et intelligence des princes, ce que les particuliers ne scauroient faire." (Ibid.)

best for the security of their state, provided it does you no injury. Among us princes we are not wont to make such long orations as you do, but you ought to be content with the few words that we bestow upon you, and make yourself quiet thereby.¹

"If I ever do anything for you again, I choose to be treated more honourably. I shall therefore appoint some personages of my council to communicate with you. And in the first place I choose to hear and see for myself what has taken place already, and have satisfaction about that, before I make any reply to what you have said to me as to greater assistance. And so I will leave you to-day, without troubling you further."²

With this her Majesty swept from the apartment, leaving the deputies somewhat astounded at the fierce but adroit manner in which the tables had for a moment been turned upon them.

It was certainly a most unexpected blow, this charge of the States having left the English soldiers—whose numbers the Queen had so suddenly multiplied by three—unpaid and unfed. Those Englishmen who, as individuals, had entered the States' service, had been—like all the other troops—regularly paid. This distinctly appeared from the statements of her own counsellors and generals.³ On the other hand, the Queen's contingent, now dwindled to about half their original number, had been notoriously unpaid for nearly six months.

This has already been made sufficiently clear from the private letters of most responsible persons. That these soldiers were starving, deserting, and pillaging, was, alas! too true; but the envoys of the States hardly expected to be censured by her Majesty, because she had neglected to pay

¹ "Entre nous princes nous ne sca-vons ainsi orer comme vous faictes, mais vous devriez estre contentz avecq ce peu de parolles qu'on vous dict, et vous assurer la dessus." 'Reponse,' &c., just cited.

² Ibid. Compare Bor, II. xxii. 873, 874. Wagenaar, viii. 193-194.

³ Memorial given by Wilkes to Sir R. Williams, Feb. 1687. (S. P. Office MS.)

her own troops. It was one of the points concerning which they had been especially enjoined to complain, that the English cavalry, converted into highwaymen by want of pay, had been plundering the peasantry,¹ and we have seen that Thomas Wilkes had "pawned his carcass" to provide for their temporary relief.

With regard to the insinuation that prominent personages in the country had been tampered with by the enemy, the envoys were equally astonished by such an attack. The great Deventer treason had not yet been heard of in England—for it had occurred only a week before this first interview—but something of the kind was already feared; for the slippery dealings of York and Stanley with Tassis and Parma had long been causing painful anxiety, and had formed the subject of repeated remonstrances on the part of the States to Leicester and to the Queen. The deputies were hardly prepared therefore to defend their own people against dealing privately with the King of Spain. The only man suspected of such practices was Leicester's own favourite and financier, Jacques Ringault, whom the Earl had persisted in employing against the angry remonstrances of the States, who believed him to be a Spanish spy; and the man was now in prison, and threatened with capital punishment.

To suppose that Buys or Barneveld, Roorda, Meetkerk, or any other leading statesman in the Netherlands, was contemplating a private arrangement with Philip II., was as ludicrous a conception as to imagine Walsingham a pensioner of the Pope, or Cecil in league with the Duke of Guise. The end and aim of the States' party was war. In war they not only

¹ "Les compagnies Anglaises," wrote the States-General to Leicester, "tant de cheval que de pied à la charge de S. Majesté, ayans delaisé les frontières se sont jectez en Hollande, ou ils foulent et mangent le bon homme sous pretexte qu'ils disent n'avoir reçu aucun payment en cinq mois, ce que cause grande alteration par-devers l'amoindrissement des contributions du Plat Pays. Et comme ils

tiennent journellement plusieurs propos estranges contre la dite province d'Hollande, et qu'ils y veulent pourchasser leur payment, a esté trouvé bon de les faire contenir ou ils sont," &c. States-General to Leicester, 1 March, 1587. (Hague Archives, MS.)

The statements of Wilkes to his government, of like import, have been given in the notes on preceding pages.

saw the safety of the reformed religion, but the only means of maintaining the commercial prosperity of the commonwealth. The whole correspondence of the times shows that no politician in the country dreamed of peace, either by public or secret negotiation. On the other hand—as will be made still clearer than ever—the Queen was longing for peace, and was treating for peace at that moment through private agents, quite without the knowledge of the States, and in spite of her indignant disavowals in her speech to the envoys.

Yet if Elizabeth could have had the privilege of entering—as we are about to do—into the private cabinet of that excellent King of Spain, with whom she had once been such good friends, who had even sought her hand in marriage, and with whom she saw no reason whatever why she should not live at peace, she might have modified her expressions on this subject. Certainly, if she could have looked through the piles of papers—as we intend to do—which lay upon that library-table, far beyond the seas and mountains, she would have perceived some objections to the scheme of living at peace with that diligent letter-writer.

Perhaps, had she known how the subtle Farnese was about to express himself concerning the fast-approaching execution of Mary, and the as inevitably impending destruction of “that Englishwoman” through the schemes of his master and himself, she would have paid less heed to the sentiments couched in most exquisite Italian which Alexander was at the same time whispering in her ear, and would have taken less offence at the blunt language of the States-General.

Nevertheless, for the present, Elizabeth would give no better answer than the hot-tempered one which had already somewhat discomfited the deputies.

Two days afterwards, the five envoys had an interview with several members of her Majesty’s council, in the private apartment of the Lord-Treasurer in Greenwich Palace. Burghley, being indisposed, was lying upon his bed. Leicester, Admiral Lord Howard, Lord Hunsden, Sir Christopher Hatton, Lord Buckhurst, and Secretary Davison, were present, and the

Lord-Treasurer proposed that the conversation should be in Latin, that being the common language most familiar to them all.¹ Then, turning over the leaves of the report, a copy of which lay on his bed, he asked the envoys, whether, in case her Majesty had not sent over the assistance which she had done under the Earl of Leicester, their country would not have been utterly ruined.

"To all appearance, yes," replied Menyn.

"But," continued Burghley, still running through the pages of the document, and here and there demanding an explanation of an obscure passage or two, "you are now proposing to her Majesty to send 10,000 foot and 2000 horse, and to lend 60,000*l*. This is altogether monstrous and excessive. *Nobody will ever dare even to speak to her Majesty* on the subject. When you first came in 1585, you asked for 12,000 men, but you were fully authorized to accept 6000. No doubt that is the case now."²

"On that occasion," answered Menyn, "our main purpose was to induce her Majesty to accept the sovereignty, or at least the perpetual protection of our country. Failing in that we broached the third point, and not being able to get 12,000 soldiers we compounded for 5000, the agreement being subject to ratification by our principals. We gave ample security in shape of the mortgaged cities. But experience has shown us that these forces and this succour are insufficient. We have therefore been sent to beg her Majesty to make up the contingent to the amount originally requested."

"But we are obliged to increase the garrisons in the cautionary towns," said one of the English councillors, "as 800 men in a city like Flushing are very little."

"Pardon me," replied Valck, "the burghers are not enemies but friends to her Majesty and to the English nation. They are her dutiful subjects like all the inhabitants of the Netherlands."

¹ Rapport de la Légation. Conférence des Députés avec les Commissaires de S. M., ⁷/₁₇ Feb. 1587. (Hague Archives, MS.)

² Ibid.

"It is quite true," said Burghley, after having made some critical remarks upon the military system of the Provinces, "and a very common adage, *quod tunc tua res agitur, paries cum proximus ardet*, but, nevertheless, this war principally concerns you. Therefore you are bound to do your utmost to meet its expenses in your own country, quite as much as a man who means to build a house is expected to provide the stone and timber himself. But the States have not done their best. They have not at the appointed time come forward with their extraordinary contributions for the last campaign. "How many men," he asked, "are required for garrisons in all the fortresses and cities, and for the field?"

"But," interposed Lord Hunsden, "not half so many men are needed in the garrisons; for the burghers ought to be able to defend their own cities. Moreover it is probable that your ordinary contributions might be continued and doubled and even tripled."¹

"And on the whole," observed the Lord Admiral, "don't you think that *the putting an army in the field* might be dispensed with for this year? Her Majesty at present must get together and equip a fleet of war vessels against the King of Spain, which will be an excessively large pennyworth, besides the assistance which she gives her neighbours."

"Yes, indeed," said Secretary Davison, "it would be difficult to exaggerate the enormous expense which her Majesty must encounter this year for defending and liberating her own kingdoms against the King of Spain. That monarch is making great naval preparations, and is treating all Englishmen in the most hostile manner. We are on the brink of declared war with Spain, with the French King, who is arresting all English persons and property within his kingdom, and with Scotland, all which countries are understood to have made a league together on account of the Queen of Scotland, whom it will be absolutely necessary to put to death in order to preserve the life of her Majesty, and are about to make war

¹ MS. Report last cited.

upon England. This matter then will cost us, the current year, at least eight hundred thousand pounds sterling. Nevertheless her Majesty is sure to assist you so far as her means allow; and I, for my part, will do my best to keep her Majesty well disposed to your cause, even as I have ever done, as you well know."¹

Thus spoke poor Davison, but a few days before the fatal 8th of February, little dreaming that the day for his influencing the disposition of her Majesty would soon be gone, and that he was himself to be crushed for ever by the blow which was about to destroy the captive Queen. The political combinations resulting from the tragedy were not to be exactly as he foretold, but there is little doubt that in him the Netherlands, and Leicester, and the Queen of England, were to lose an honest, diligent, and faithful friend.

"Well, gentlemen," said the Lord-Treasurer, after a few more questions concerning the financial abilities of the States had been asked and answered, "it is getting late into the evening, and time for you all to get back to London. Let me request you, as soon as may be, to draw up some articles in writing, to which we will respond immediately."²

Menyn then, in the name of the deputies, expressed thanks for the urbanity shown them in the conference, and spoke of the deep regret with which they had perceived, by her Majesty's answer two days before, that she was so highly offended with them and with the States-General. He then, notwithstanding Burghley's previous hint as to the lateness of the hour, took up the Queen's answer, point by point, contradicted all its statements, appealing frequently to Lord Leicester for confirmation of what he advanced, and concluded by begging the councillors to defend the cause of the Netherlands to her Majesty. Burghley requested them to make an excuse or reply to the Queen in writing, and send it to him to present.³

Thus the conference terminated, and the envoys returned to London. They were fully convinced by the result of these

¹ MS. Report last cited.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid. Compare Bor, II. xxii. 875-877, *seq.*

interviews, as they told their constituents, that her Majesty, by false statements and reports of persons either grossly ignorant or not having the good of the commonwealth before their eyes, had been very incorrectly informed as to the condition of the Provinces, and of the great efforts made by the States-General to defend their country against the enemy. It was obvious, they said, that their measures had been exaggerated in order to deceive the Queen and her council.¹

And thus statements and counter-statements, protocols and apostilles, were glibly exchanged, the heap of diplomatic rubbish was rising higher and higher, and the councillors and envoys, pleased with their work, were growing more and more amicable, when the court was suddenly startled by the news of the Deventer and Zutphen treason. The intelligence was accompanied by the famous 4th of February letter, which descended, like a bombshell, in the midst of the decorous council-chamber. Such language had rarely been addressed to the Earl of Leicester, and, through him, to the imperious sovereign herself, as the homely truths with which Barneveld, speaking with the voice of the States-General, now smote the delinquent governor.

"My Lord," said he, "it is notorious, and needs no illustration whatever, with what true confidence and unfeigned affection we received your Excellency in our land; the States-General, the States-Provincial, the magistrates, and the communities of the chief cities in the United Provinces, all uniting to do honour to her serene Majesty of England and to yourself, and to confer upon you the government-general over us. And although we should willingly have placed some limitations upon the authority thus bestowed on you, in order that by such a course your own honour and the good and constitutional condition of the country might be alike preserved, yet finding your Excellency not satisfied with those limitations, we postponed every objection, and conformed ourselves to your pleasure. Yet, before coming to that decision, we had well

MS. Report, $\frac{9}{19}$ Feb. 1587, before cited.

considered that by doing so we might be opening a door to many ambitious, avaricious, and pernicious persons, both of these countries and from other nations, who might seize the occasion to advance their own private profits, to the detriment of the country and the dishonour of your Excellency.

“And, in truth, such persons have done their work so efficiently as to inspire you with distrust against the most faithful and capable men in the Provinces, against the Estates General and Provincial, magistrates, and private persons, knowing very well that they could never arrive at their own ends so long as you were guided by the constitutional authorities of the country. And precisely upon the distrust, thus created as a foundation, they raised a back-stairs council, by means of which they were able to further their ambitious, avaricious, and seditious practices, notwithstanding the good advice and remonstrances of the council of state, and the States General and Provincial.”¹

He proceeded to handle the subjects of the English rose-noble, put in circulation by Leicester's finance or back-stairs council at two florins above its value, to the manifest detriment of the Provinces, to the detestable embargo which had prevented them from using the means bestowed upon them by God himself to defend their country, to the squandering and embezzlement of the large sums contributed by the Provinces and entrusted to the Earl's administration, to the starving condition of the soldiers, maltreated by government, and thus compelled to prey upon the inhabitants—so that troops in the States' service had never been so abused during the whole war, although the States had never before voted such large contributions nor paid them so promptly—to the placing in posts of high honour and trust men of notoriously bad character and even Spanish spies; to the taking away the public authority from those to whom it legitimately belonged, and conferring it on incompetent and unqualified persons; to the illegal banishment of respectable citizens, to the violation

¹ Lettre des Etats à Leycestre, 4 Feb. 1587. (Hague Archives, MS.) | Compare Bor, II. xxii. 944, seq. Wagenaar, viii. 202. Le Petit, II. xiv. 541.

of time-honoured laws and privileges, to the shameful attempts to repudiate the ancient authority of the States, and to usurp a control over the communities and nobles by them represented, and to the perpetual efforts to foster dissension, disunion, and rebellion among the inhabitants. Having thus drawn up a heavy bill of indictment, nominally against the Earl's illegal counsellors, but in reality against the Earl himself, he proceeded to deal with the most important matter of all.

"The principal cities and fortresses in the country have been placed in hands of men suspected by the States on legitimate grounds, men who had been convicted of treason against these Provinces, and who continued to be suspected, notwithstanding that your Excellency had pledged your own honour for their fidelity. Finally, by means of these scoundrels,¹ it was brought to pass, that—the council of state having been invested by your Excellency with supreme authority during your absence—a secret document was brought to light after your departure, by which the most substantial matters, and those most vital to the defence of the country, were withdrawn from the disposition of that council. And now, alas, we see the effects of these practices !

"Sir William Stanley, by you appointed governor of Deventer, and Rowland York, governor of Fort Zutphen, have refused, by virtue of that secret document, to acknowledge any authority in this country. And notwithstanding that since your departure they and their soldiers have been supported at our expense, and had just received a full month's pay from the States, they have traitorously and villainously delivered the city and the fortress to the enemy, with a declaration made by Stanley that he did the deed to ease his conscience, and to render to the King of Spain the city which of right was belonging to him. And this is a crime so dishonourable, scandalous, ruinous, and treasonable, as that, during this whole war, we have never seen the like. And we are now in daily fear lest the English commanders in Bergen-op-Zoom,

¹ "Gibier." MS. last cited.

Ostend, and other cities, should commit the same crime. And although we fully suspected the designs of Stanley and York, yet your Excellency's secret document had deprived us of the power to act.

"We doubt not that her Majesty and your Excellency will think this strange language. But we can assure you, that we too think it strange and grievous that those places should have been confided to such men, against our repeated remonstrances, and that, moreover, this very Stanley should have been recommended by your Excellency for general of all the forces. And although we had many just and grave reasons for opposing your administration—even as our ancestors were often wont to rise against the sovereigns of the country—we have, nevertheless, patiently suffered for a long time, in order not to diminish your authority, which we deemed so important to our welfare, and in the hope that you would at last be moved by the perilous condition of the commonwealth, and awake to the artifices of your advisers.

"But at last—feeling that the existence of the state can no longer be preserved without proper authority, and that the whole community is full of emotion and distrust, on account of these great treasons—we, the States-General, as well as the States-Provincial, have felt constrained to establish such a government as we deem meet for the emergency. And of this we think proper to apprise your Excellency."

He then expressed the conviction that all these evil deeds had been accomplished against the intentions of the Earl and the English government, and requested his Excellency so to deal with her Majesty that the contingent of horse and foot hitherto accorded by her "might be maintained in good order, and in better pay."

Here, then, was substantial choleric phraseology, as good plain speaking as her Majesty had just been employing, and with quite as sufficient cause. Here was no pleasant diplomatic fencing, but straightforward vigorous thrusts. It was no wonder that poor Wilkes should have thought the letter "too sharp," when he heard it read in the assembly, and that

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he should have done his best to prevent it from being despatched. He would have thought it sharper could he have seen how the pride of her Majesty and of Leicester was wounded by it to the quick. Her list of grievances against the States seem to vanish into air. Who had been tampering with the Spaniards now? Had that "shadowy and imaginary authority" granted to Leicester not proved substantial enough? Was it the States-General, the state-council, or was it the "absolute governor"—who had carried off the supreme control of the commonwealth in his pocket—that was responsible for the ruin effected by Englishmen who had scorned all "authority" but his own?

The States, in another blunt letter to the Queen herself, declared the loss of Deventer to be more disastrous to them than even the fall of Antwerp had been; for the republic had now been split asunder, and its most ancient and vital portions almost cut away. Nevertheless they were not "dazzled nor despairing," they said, but more determined than ever to maintain their liberties, and bid defiance to the Spanish tyrant. And again they demanded of, rather than implored, her Majesty to be true to her engagements with them.¹

The interviews which followed were more tempestuous than ever. "I had intended that my Lord of Leicester should return to you," she said to the envoys. "But that shall never be. He has been treated with gross ingratitude, he has served the Provinces with ability, he has consumed his own property there, he has risked his life, he has lost his near kinsman, Sir Philip Sidney, whose life I should be glad to purchase with many millions, and, in place of all reward, he receives these venomous letters, of which a copy has been sent to his sovereign to blacken him with her." She had been advising

¹ "Car si la perte d'Anvers a esté tres grande pour toute le pays, ceste cy tire avec soi plus grande consequence, tout au regard de plusieurs autres villes circumvoisines de Deventer, lesquelles ne pourront estre avictuallées que par force, que autrement. Non pas que nous disons cesq comme esblouys et par desespoir. . . .

Car nous ne manquerons jamais en nos premieres resolutions de nous vouloir maintenir contre le Roi d'Espagne, pour la conservation de la religion Chrestienne, nos privileges, franchises, et libertés." States-General to the Queen, 6 Feb. 1587. (Hague Archives, MS.)

him to return, she added, but she was now resolved that he should never set foot in the Provinces again."¹

Here the Earl, who was present, exclaimed—beating himself on the breast—"a tali officio libera nos, Domine!"²

But the States, undaunted by these explosions of wrath, replied that it had ever been their custom, when their laws and liberties were invaded, to speak their mind boldly to kings and governors, and to procure redress of their grievances, as became free men.³

During that whole spring the Queen was at daggers drawn with all her leading counsellors, mainly in regard to that great question of questions—the relations of England with the Netherlands and Spain. Walsingham—who felt it madness to dream of peace, and who believed it the soundest policy to deal with Parma and his veterans upon the soil of Flanders, with the forces of the republic for allies, rather than to await his arrival in London—was driven almost to frenzy by what he deemed the Queen's perverseness.

"Our sharp words continue," said the Secretary, "which doth greatly disquiet her Majesty, and discomfort her poor servants that attend her. The Lord-Treasurer remaineth still in disgrace, and, behind my back, her Majesty giveth out very hard speeches of myself, which I the rather credit, for that I find, in dealing with her, I am nothing gracious; and if her Majesty could be otherwise served, I know I should not be used. . . . Her Majesty doth wholly lend herself to devise some further means to disgrace her poor council, in respect whereof she neglecteth all other causes. . . . The discord between her Majesty and her council hindereth the necessary consultations that were to be destined for the preventing of the manifold perils that hang over this realm. . . . Sir Christopher Hatton hath dealt very plainly and dutifully

¹ Bor, II. xxii. 949.

² Ibid.

³ "Nous sommes accoustumez, comme aussi ont ete nos predecesseurs, de remonstrer a nos princes et gouverneurs librement des desordres et contraventions que nous trouvons

contre nos privileges et libertes, comme avons fait a V. E. etant ici,—ce que nous avons toujours tenu etre de notre devoir et vrai moyen pour parvenir au redres des dites desordres." &c. States-General to Leicester, 1 March, 1587. (Hague Archives, MS.)

with her, which hath been accepted in so evil part as he is resolved to retire for a time. I assure you I find every man weary of attendance here. I would to God I could find as good resolution in her Majesty to proceed in a princely course in relieving the United Provinces, as I find an honorable disposition in your Lordship to employ yourself in their service.”¹

The Lord-Treasurer was much puzzled, very wretched, but philosophically resigned. “Why her Majesty useth me thus strangely, I know not,” he observed. “To some she saith that she meant not I should have gone from the court; to some she saith, she may not admit me, nor give me contentment. I shall dispose myself to enjoy God’s favour, and shall do nothing to deserve her disfavour. And if I be suffered to be a stranger to her affairs, I shall have a quieter life.”²

Leicester, after the first burst of his anger was over, was willing to return to the Provinces. He protested that he had a greater affection for the Netherland people—not for the governing powers—even than he felt for the people of England.”³ “There is nothing sticks in my stomach,” he said, “but the good-will of that poor afflicted people, for whom, I take God to record, I could be content to lose any limb I have to do them good.”⁴ But he was crippled with debt, and the Queen resolutely refused to lend him a few thousand pounds, without which he could not stir. Walsingham in vain did battle with her parsimony, representing how urgently and vividly the necessity of his return had been depicted by all her ministers in both countries, and how much it imported to her own safety and service. But she was obdurate. “She would rather,” he said bitterly to Leicester, “hazard the increase of confusion there—which may put the whole country in peril—than supply your want. The like course she holdeth in the rest of her causes, which maketh me to wish myself

¹ Walsingham to Leicester, 3 April, 1587. Same to same, 10 April, 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, C. xi. 316-319.)

² Burghley to Leicester, 16 April,

1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, C. xi. 322.)

³ Bor, II. xxii. 950-952.

⁴ Leicester to Walsingham, 16 April,

1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

from the helm." At last she agreed to advance him ten thousand pounds, but on so severe conditions, that the Earl declared himself heart-broken again, and protested that he would neither accept the money, nor ever set foot in the Netherlands. "Let Norris stay there," he said in a fury; "he will do admirably, no doubt. Only let it not be supposed that I can be there also. Not for one hundred thousand pounds would I be in that country with him."¹

Meantime it was agreed that Lord Buckhurst should be sent forth on what Wilkes termed a mission of expostulation,

¹ "For the 10,000*l*. for your particular," said Walsingham, "I have dealt very earnestly, but cannot prevail to win her Majesty to assent thereunto. I caused Mr. Barker to set down a note of your mortgages that stand upon forfeiture for lack of this promised support of the 10,000*l*., wherewith she has been made acquainted, but not moved thereby to relieve you." Walsingham to Leicester, 6 April, 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, C. xi. 323. MS.)

And again, two days later—"I am sorry that her Majesty sticketh with you for the loan, for I see, without your return, both the cause and many an honest man that have showed them most constantly affected to you, will go to ruin. I wish you had it, though it were for but two months. The enemy is not like to attempt any great matter in respect of his wants. But I am most sorry to see so great an advantage lost as her Majesty might have had, in case she had been induced to contribute towards the putting an army into the field." Same to same, 8 April, 1587. *Ibid.* p. 321-331. MS.

And once more, a week afterwards—"She can be content to furnish you with 10,000*l*., so as you would devise, out of her entertainment and the States to pay her in one year the said sum, which she saith you promised unto herself, and therefore willed me to write to you to know whether you can make repayment in such order as she requireth." Same to same, 14 April, 1587. *Ibid.* 326.

There was not much sentiment between the "throned vestal" and "Sweet Robin" when pounds and

shillings were discussed; and it will be seen that the Earl was rendered quite frantic by the screwing process to which he found himself subjected by her whose "blessed beams" had formerly been so "nutritious."

"I perceive by your letters," said Leicester, "that her Majesty would now I should go over, and will lend me 10,000*l*. so she may be sure to receive it back within a year. I did offer to her Majesty heretofore that she should have all I receive of her entertainment, and as much besides as shall yield her 2,000*l*., paid either 1,000*l*. at Michaelmas and the other at our Lady-day, or else both at our Lady, which is less than a year; and so long as I shall receive, then her Majesty shall receive after this sort till her 10,000*l*. be paid. And this is more, I am now persuaded, than I shall be able to do, and keep any countenance fit for the place . . . but seeing I find her Majesty's hardness continue still to me as it doth, I pray you let me your earnest and true furtherance for my abode at home and discharge . . . for my heart is more than half-broken, and I do think her Majesty had rather far continue Sir J. Norris there, in respect to the reconciliation between him and Count Hollock. . . . But I will never serve with him again as long as I live; no, not for to have 100,000*l*. given me. . . . I know the man too well to trust to his service. I shall have no good thereby—not if I were an angel, for he cannot obey nor almost like of an equal . . . and already he hath taken advantage to curry favour with captains and soldiers. . . . He

and a very ill-timed one. This new envoy was to inquire into the causes of the discontent, and to do his best to remove them : as if any man in England or in Holland doubted as to the causes, or as to the best means of removing them ; or as if it were not absolutely certain that delay was the very worst specific that could be adopted—delay—which the Netherland statesmen, as well as the Queen's wisest counsellors, most deprecated, which Alexander and Philip most desired, and by indulging in which her Majesty was most directly playing into her adversary's hand. Elizabeth was preparing to put cards upon the table against an antagonist whose game was close, whose honesty was always to be suspected, and who was a consummate master in what was then considered diplomatic sleight of hand. So Lord Buckhurst was to go forth to expostulate at the Hague, while transports were loading in Cadiz and Lisbon, reiters levying in Germany, pikemen and musketeers in Spain and Italy, for a purpose concerning which Walsingham and Barneveld had for a long time felt little doubt.

Meantime Lord Leicester went to Bath to drink the waters, and after he had drunk the waters, the Queen, ever anxious for his health, was resolved that he should not lose the benefit of those salubrious draughts by travelling too soon, or by plunging anew into the fountains of bitterness which flowed perennially in the Netherlands.¹

shall never bear away under me; his disdain and craft hath no moderation; and I know, for all those speeches of my going, his friends make full account that he shall remain there as her Majesty's general of the forces." Leicester to Walsingham, 16 April, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

¹ "Finding your presence here necessary," wrote Walsingham, "for the expedition of the Low Country causes,

I moved her Majesty that I might be authorised in her name to hasten your repair hither, whereunto she would in no sort consent, pretending that after the use of the Bath, it would be dangerous for your Lordship to take any extraordinary travail. There is some doubt that Ostend will be presently besieged," &c. &c. Walsingham to Leicester, 17 April, 1587. (B. Mus. Galba, C. xi. 327, MS.)

CHAPTER XV.

Buckhurst sent to the Netherlands—Alarming State of Affairs on his Arrival—His Efforts to conciliate—Democratic Theories of Wilkes—Sophistry of the Argument—Dispute between Wilkes and Barneveld—Religious Tolerance by the States—Their Constitutional Theory—Deventer's bad Counsels to Leicester—Their pernicious Effect—Real and supposed Plots against Hohenlo—Mutual Suspicion and Distrust—Buckhurst seeks to restore good Feeling—The Queen angry and vindictive—She censures Buckhurst's Course—Leicester's Wrath at Hohenlo's Charges of a Plot by the Earl to murder him—Buckhurst's eloquent Appeals to the Queen—Her perplexing and contradictory Orders—Despair of Wilkes—Leicester announces his Return—His Instructions—Letter to Junius—Barneveld denounces him in the States.

WE return to the Netherlands. If ever proof were afforded of the influence of individual character on the destiny of nations and of the world, it certainly was seen in the year 1687. We have lifted the curtain of the secret council-chamber at Greenwich. We have seen all Elizabeth's advisers anxious to arouse her from her fatal credulity, from her almost as fatal parsimony. We have seen Leicester anxious to return, despite all fancied indignities, Walsingham eager to expedite the enterprise, and the Queen remaining obdurate, while month after month of precious time was melting away.

In the Netherlands, meantime, discord and confusion had been increasing every day; and the first great cause of such a dangerous condition of affairs was the absence of the governor. In this all parties agreed. The Leicestrians, the anti-Leicestrians, the Holland party, the Utrecht party, the English counsellors, the English generals, in private letter, in solemn act, all warned the Queen against the lamentable effects resulting from Leicester's inopportune departure and prolonged absence.¹

On the first outbreak of indignation after the Deventer affair, Prince Maurice was placed at the head of the general government, with the violent Hohenlo as his lieutenant.² The

¹ Documents in Bor, III. xxiii. 76-80.

² Wagenaar, viii. 204.

greatest exertions were made by these two nobles and by Barneveld, who guided the whole policy of the party, to secure as many cities as possible to their cause. Magistrates and commandants of garrisons in many towns willingly gave in their adhesion to the new government ; others refused ; especially Diedrich Sonoy, an officer of distinction, who was governor of Enkhuyzen, and influential throughout North Holland, and who remained a stanch partisan of Leicester.¹ Utrecht, the stronghold of the Leicestrians, was wavering and much torn by faction ; Hohenlo and Moeurs had “banquetted and feasted” to such good purpose that they had gained over half the captains of the burgher-guard, and, aided by the branch of nobles, were making a good fight against the Leicester magistracy and the clerical force, enriched by the plunder of the old Catholic livings, who denounced as Papistical and Hispaniolized all who favoured the party of Maurice and Barneveld.

By the end of March the envoys returned from London, and in their company came Lord Buckhurst, as special ambassador from the Queen.²

Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst—afterwards Earl of Dorset and lord-treasurer—was then fifty-one years of age. A man of large culture—poet, dramatist, diplomatist—bred to the bar ; afterwards elevated to the peerage ; endowed with high character and strong intellect ; ready with tongue and pen ; handsome of person, and with a fascinating address, he was as fit a person to send on a mission of expostulation as any man to be found in England. But the author of the ‘Induction to the Mirror for Magistrates’ and of ‘Gorboduc,’ had come to the Netherlands on a forlorn hope. To expostulate in favour of peace with a people who knew that their existence depended on war, to reconcile those to delay who felt that delay was death, and to heal animosities between men who were enemies from their cradles to their graves, was a difficult mission. But the chief ostensible object of Buckhurst was to smooth the way for Leicester, and, if possible, to

¹ Wagenaar, viii. 176, 185, 209-211, 270-278. Bor, III. xxiii. 10, seq. Reyd, vi. 101.

² Bor, xxii. 952. Wagenaar, 216.

persuade the Netherlanders as to the good inclinations of the English government. This was no easy task, for they knew that their envoys had been dismissed, without even a promise of subsidy. They had asked for twelve thousand soldiers and sixty thousand pounds, and had received a volley of abuse. Over and over again, through many months, the Queen fell into a paroxysm of rage when even an allusion was made to the loan of fifty or sixty thousand pounds ; and even had she promised the money, it would have given but little satisfaction. As Count Moeurs observed, he would rather see one English rose-noble than a hundred royal promises. So the Hollanders and Zeelanders—not fearing Leicester’s influence within their little morsel of a territory—were concentrating their means of resistance upon their own soil, intending to resist Spain, and, if necessary, England, in their last ditch, and with the last drop of their blood.

While such was the condition of affairs, Lord Buckhurst landed at Flushing—four months after the departure of Leicester—on the 24th March, having been tossing three days and nights at sea in a great storm, “miserably sick and in great danger of drowning.”¹ Sir William Russell, governor of Flushing, informed him of the progress making by Prince Maurice in virtue of his new authority. He told him that the Zeeland regiment, vacant by Sidney’s death, and which the Queen wished bestowed upon Russell himself, had been given to Count Solms ; a circumstance which was very sure to excite her Majesty’s ire ; but that the greater number, and those of the better sort, disliked the alteration of government, and relied entirely upon the Queen. Sainte Aldegonde visited him at Middelburgh, and in a “long discourse” expressed the most friendly sentiments towards England, with free offers of personal service. “Nevertheless,” said Buckhurst, cautiously, “I mean to trust the effect, not his words, and so I hope he shall not much deceive me. His opinion is that the Earl of Leicester’s absence hath chiefly caused this change, and that without his return it will hardly be restored again, but that

¹ Buckhurst to Walsingham, 26th March, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

upon his arrival all these clouds will prove but a summer-shower."¹

As a matter of course the new ambassador lifted up his voice, immediately after setting foot on shore, in favour of the starving soldiers of his Queen. "'Tis a most lamentable thing," said he, "to hear the complaints of soldiers and captains for want of pay." . . . Whole companies made their way into his presence, literally crying aloud for bread. "For Jesus' sake," wrote Buckhurst, "hasten to send relief with all speed, and let such victuallers be appointed as have a conscience not to make themselves rich with the famine of poor soldiers. If her Majesty send not money, and that with speed, for their payment, I am afraid to think what mischief and miseries are like to follow."²

Then the ambassador proceeded to the Hague, holding interviews with influential personages in private, and with the States-General in public. Such was the charm of his manner, and so firm the conviction of sincerity and good-will which he inspired, that in the course of a fortnight there was already a sensible change in the aspect of affairs. The enemy, who, at the time of their arrival, had been making bonfires and holding triumphal processions for joy of the great breach between Holland and England, and had been "hoping to swallow them all up, while there were so few left who knew how to act," were already manifesting disappointment.³

In a solemn meeting of the States-General with the state-council, Buckhurst addressed the assembly upon the general subject of her Majesty's goodness to the Netherlands. He spoke of the gracious assistance rendered by her, notwithstanding her many special charges for the common cause, and of the mighty enmities which she had incurred for their sake. He sharply censured the Hollanders for their cruelty to men who had shed their blood in their cause, but who were now driven forth from their towns, and left to starve on the highways, and hated for their nation's sake; as if the whole

¹ Buckhurst to Walsingham, MS. last cited.

² Ibid.

³ Bartholomew Clerk to Burghley, 12 April, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

English name deserved to be soiled "for the treachery of two miscreants." He spoke strongly of their demeanour towards the Earl of Leicester, and of the wrongs they had done him, and told them, that, if they were not ready to atone to her Majesty for such injuries, they were not to wonder if their deputies received no better answer at her hands. "She who embraced your cause," he said, "when other mighty princes forsook you, will still stand fast unto you, yea, and increase her goodness, if her present state may suffer it."¹

After being addressed in this manner the council of state made what Counsellor Clerk called a "very honest, modest, and wise answer;" but the States-General, not being able "so easily to discharge that which had so long boiled within them," deferred their reply until the following day. They then brought forward a deliberate rejoinder, in which they expressed themselves devoted to her Majesty, and, on the whole, well disposed to the Earl. As to the 4th February letter, it had been written "in amaritudine cordis," upon hearing the treasons of York and Stanley, and in accordance with "their custom and liberty used towards all princes, whereby they had long preserved their estate," and in the conviction that the real culprits for all the sins of his Excellency's government were certain "lewd persons who sought to seduce his Lordship, and to cause him to hate the States."

Buckhurst did not think it well to reply, at that moment, upon the ground that there had been already crimination and recrimination more than enough, and that "a little bitterness more had rather caused them to determine dangerously than resolve for the best."²

They then held council together—the envoys and the States-General, as to the amount of troops absolutely necessary—casting up the matter "as pinchingly as possibly might be." And the result was, that 20,000 foot and 2000 horse for garrison work, and an army of 13,000 foot, 5000 horse, and 1000 pioneers, for a campaign of five or six months, were pronounced indispensable. This would require all their 240,000*l.*

¹ Bartholomew Clerk to Burghley, *ubi sup.*

² *Ibid.*

sterling a-year, regular contribution, her Majesty's contingent of 140,000*l.*, and an extra sum of 150,000*l.* sterling. Of this sum the States requested her Majesty should furnish two-thirds, while they agreed to furnish the other third, which would make in all 240,000*l.* for the Queen, and 290,000*l.* for the States. As it was understood that the English subsidies were only a loan, secured by mortgage of the cautionary towns, this did not seem very unreasonable, when the intimate blending of England's welfare with that of the Provinces was considered.¹

Thus it will be observed that Lord Buckhurst—while doing his best to conciliate personal feuds and heartburnings—had done full justice to the merits of Leicester, and had placed in strongest light the favours conferred by her Majesty.

He then proceeded to Utrecht, where he was received with many demonstrations of respect, "with solemn speeches" from magistrates and burgher-captains, with military processions, and with great banquets, which were, however, conducted with decorum, and at which even Count Moeurs excited universal astonishment by his sobriety.² It was difficult, however, for matters to go very smoothly, except upon the surface. What could be more disastrous than for a little commonwealth—a mere handful of people, like these Netherlanders, engaged in mortal combat with the most powerful monarch in the world, and with the first general of the age, within a league of their borders—thus to be deprived of all organized government at a most critical moment, and to be left to wrangle with their allies and among themselves, as to the form of polity to be adopted, while waiting the pleasure of a capricious and despotic woman?

And the very foundation of the authority by which the Spanish yoke had been abjured, the sovereignty offered to Elizabeth, and the government-general conferred on Leicester, was fiercely assailed by the confidential agents of Elizabeth herself. The dispute went into the very depths of the social

¹ Bartholomew Clerk to Burghley, MS. last cited.

² Gilpin to Wilkes, 25 April, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

contract. Already Wilkes, standing up stoutly for the democratic views of the governor, who was so foully to requite him, had assured the English government that the "people were ready to cut the throats" of the States-General at any convenient moment. The sovereign people, not the deputies, were alone to be heeded, he said, and although he never informed the world by what process he had learned the deliberate opinion of that sovereign, as there had been no assembly excepting those of the States-General and States-Provincial—he was none the less fully satisfied that the people were all with Leicester, and bitterly opposed to the States.

"For the sovereignty, or supreme authority," said he, "through failure of a legitimate prince, belongs to the people, and not to you, gentlemen, who are only servants, ministers, and deputies of the people. You have your commissions or instructions surrounded by limitations—which conditions are so widely different from the power of sovereignty, as the might of the subject is in regard to his prince, or of a servant in respect to his master. For sovereignty is not limited either as to power or as to time. Still less do you *represent* the sovereignty; for the people, in giving the general and absolute government to the Earl of Leicester, have conferred upon him at once the exercise of justice, the administration of polity, of naval affairs, of war, and of all the other points of sovereignty. Of these a governor-general is however only the depositary or guardian, until such time as it may please the prince or people to revoke the trust; there being no other in this state who can do this; seeing that it was the people, who, through the instrumentality of your offices—through you as its servants—conferred on his Excellency, this power, authority, and government. According to the common rule of law, therefore, *quo jure quid statuitur, eodem jure tolli debet*. You having been fully empowered by the provinces and cities, or, to speak more correctly, by your masters and superiors, to confer the government on his Excellency, it follows that you require a like power in order to take it away either in whole or in part. If then you had no commission

to curtail his authority, or even that of the state-council, and thus to tread upon and usurp his power as governor general and absolute, there follows of two things one: either you did not well understand what you were doing, nor duly consider how far that power reached, or—much more probably—you have fallen into the sin of disobedience, considering how solemnly you swore allegiance to him.¹

Thus subtly and ably did Wilkes defend the authority of the man who had deserted his post at a most critical moment, and had compelled the States, by his dereliction, to take the government into their own hands.

For, after all, the whole argument of the English counsellor rested upon a quibble. The people were absolutely sovereign, he said, and had lent that sovereignty to Leicester. How

¹ Kluit. 'Holl. Staatsreg.' II. 281. Compare Wagenaar, viii. 208.

It is very important to observe, that Wilkes retracted these democratic views before the end of the summer, and gradually adopted the constitutional theory maintained by Holland. He informed the Queen, on the 12th July, 1587, that in case she refused the sovereignty, it "should remain with such as by the *laws of the country do retain it*, which is *not in the common people*, but in some fifty or sixty persons in every city and town called by the name of Vroedschap. If the Earl of Leicester," said he, "should attempt to remove any of these persons constituting this Vroedschap, as it is rumoured he intends doing, it will hazard the ruin of the whole country, endanger the Earl greatly, and prove the loss of all her Majesty's charge employed in the defence of the country. It is a mistake to suppose that it will be a facile matter to carry the common people into any such violence at any time against the States; for the magistrates of every city and town, upon premonition already given, are holding a vigilant eye and severe hand over any that shall stir within any of their jurisdiction."

"The remedy," continued Wilkes, "to prevent any mischief that might ensue of any popular commotion, would

be to leave that course, and to follow the example of the late Prince of Orange, who had quite as many difficulties to contend with as the Earl of Leicester, and yet forebore to discredit the States with the people—gaining five or six of the States' members that had the most credit with the assemblies, and through them working upon all the rest; there being nothing determined or to be handled in their assemblies but he knew of it always beforehand; and whensoever he had anything to propound or bring to pass among them, he first consulted with these persons, and by them was made acquainted whether the matter would pass or be impugned, and acted accordingly." "The Prince," said Wilkes, "never attempted anything of importance without consulting the States. The people are the same now as they were then, and do not love to be subject to any monarchical government." Wilkes to the Queen, 12 July, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

It is obvious, from this change of opinion on the part of the counsellor, that he would become liable to the disapprobation of Leicester; but it seems hardly credible that he should have thereby inspired the Earl with such a hatred and longing for revenge against him as he unquestionably did excite.

had they made that loan? Through the machinery of the States-General. So long then as the Earl retained the absolute sovereignty, the States were not even representatives of the sovereign people. The sovereign people was merged into one English Earl. The English Earl had retired—indefinitely—to England. Was the sovereign people to wait for months, or years, before it regained its existence? And if not, how was it to reassert its vitality? How but through the agency of the States-General, who—according to Wilkes himself—*had been fully empowered by the Provinces and Cities to confer the government on the Earl?* The people then, after all, were the provinces and cities. And the States-General were at that moment as much qualified to represent those provinces and cities as they ever had been, and they claimed no more. Wilkes, nor any other of the Leicester party, ever hinted at a general assembly of the people. Universal suffrage was not dreamed of at that day. By the people, he meant, if he meant anything, only that very small fraction of the inhabitants of a country, who, according to the English system, in the reign of Elizabeth, constituted its Commons. He chose, rather from personal and political motives than philosophical ones, to draw a distinction between the people and the ‘States,’ but it is quite obvious, from the tone of his private communications, that by the ‘States’ he meant the individuals who happened, for the time-being, to be the deputies of the States of each Province. But it was almost an affectation to accuse those individuals of calling or considering themselves ‘sovereigns;’ for it was very well known that they sat as *envoys*, rather than as *members* of a congress, and were perpetually obliged to recur to their constituents, the States of each Province, for instructions. It was idle, because Buys and Barneveld, and Roorda, and other leaders, exercised the influence due to their talents, patriotism, and experience, to stigmatise them as usurpers of sovereignty, and to hound the rabble upon them as tyrants and mischief-makers. Yet to take this course pleased the Earl of Leicester, who saw no hope for the liberty of the people, unless absolute and uncon-

ditional authority over the people, in war, naval affairs, justice, and policy, were placed in his hands. This was the view sustained by the clergy of the Reformed Church, because they found it convenient, through such a theory, and by Leicester's power, to banish Papists, exercise intolerance in matters of religion, sequester for their own private uses the property of the Catholic Church, and obtain for their own a political power which was repugnant to the more liberal ideas of the Barneveld party.

The States of Holland—inspired as it were by the memory of that great martyr to religious and political liberty, William the Silent—maintained freedom of conscience.

The Leicester party advocated a different theory on the religious question. They were also determined to omit no effort to make the States odious.

"Seeing their violent courses," said Wilkes to Leicester, "I have not been negligent, as well by solicitations to the ministers, as by my letters to such as have continued constant in affection to your Lordship, to have the people informed of the ungrateful and dangerous proceedings of the States. They have therein travailed with so good effect, as the people are now wonderfully well disposed, and have delivered everywhere in speeches, that if, by the overthwart dealings of the States, her Majesty shall be drawn to stay her succours and goodness to them, and that thereby your Lordship be also discouraged to return, *they will cut their throats.*"¹

Who the "*people*" exactly were, that had been so wonderfully well disposed to throat-cutting by the ministers of the Gospel, did not distinctly appear. It was certain, however, that they were the special friends of Leicester, great orators, very pious, and the sovereigns of the country. So much could not be gainsaid.

"Your Lordship would wonder," continued the councillor, "to see the people—who so lately, by the practice of the said States and the accident of Deventer, were notably alienated—

¹ Wilkes to Leicester, 12 March, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

so returned to their former devotion towards her Majesty, your Lordship, and our nation."

Wilkes was able moreover to gratify the absent governor-general with the intelligence—of somewhat questionable authenticity however—that the States were very "much terrified with these threats of the people." But Barneveld came down to the council to inquire what member of that body it was who had accused the States of violating the Earl's authority. "Whoever he is," said the Advocate, "let him deliver his mind frankly, and he shall be answered." The man did not seem much terrified by the throat-cutting orations. "It is true," replied Wilkes, perceiving himself to be the person intended, "that you have very injuriously, in many of your proceedings, derogated from and trodden the authority of his Lordship and of this council under your feet."¹

And then he went into particulars, and discussed, *more suo*, the constitutional question, in which various Leicestrian counsellors seconded him.

But Barneveld grimly maintained that the States were the sovereigns, and that it was therefore unfit that the *governor, who drew his authority from them*, should call them to account for their doings. "It was as if the governors in the time of Charles V.," said the Advocate, "should have taxed that Emperor for any action of his done in the government."²

In brief, the rugged Barneveld, with threatening voice, and lion port, seemed to impersonate the States, and to hold reclaimed sovereignty in his grasp. It seemed difficult to tear it from him again.

"I did what I could," said Wilkes, "*to beat them from this humour of their sovereignty*, showing that upon that error they had grounded the rest of *their wilful absurdities*."³

Next night, he drew up sixteen articles, showing the disorders of the States, their breach of oaths, and violations of the Earl's authority; and with that commenced a series of

¹ Wilkes to Leicester, MS. last cited.

Wagenaar, viii. 208.

² Ibid. Compare Kluit, II. 281, seq. Bor, II. xxii. 918, 921, seq.

³ Wilkes to Leicester, MS. last cited.

papers interchanged by the two parties, in which the topics of the origin of government and the principles of religious freedom were handled with much ability on both sides, but at unmerciful length.

On the religious question, the States-General, led by Barneveld and by Francis Franck, expressed themselves manfully, on various occasions, during the mission of Buckhurst.

"The nobles and cities constituting the States," they said, "have been denounced to Lord Leicester as enemies of religion, by the self-seeking mischief-makers who surround him. Why? Because they had refused the demand of certain preachers to call a general synod, in defiance of the States-General, and to introduce a set of ordinances, with a system of discipline, according to *their arbitrary will*. This the late Prince of Orange and the States-General had always thought detrimental both to religion and polity. They respected the difference in religious opinions, and leaving all churches in their freedom, they *chose to compel no man's conscience*—a course which all statesmen, knowing the diversity of human opinions, had considered necessary in order to maintain fraternal harmony."¹

Such words shine through the prevailing darkness of the religious atmosphere at that epoch, like characters of light.

¹ Meteren, xiv. 250-253.

The States of Holland, under the guidance of Barneveld, took strong ground, on several occasions this year, against attempts made by the Reformed Church to meddle with secular matters. On the presentation of a petition relative to politics, by a committee of four preachers, representing the churches of Holland, answer was made through the mouth of Barneveld, that "the States were very well acquainted with the matters mentioned in the petition, and with many other things besides; that the States were quite as much interested as the churches could be in the welfare of the land, and that they could provide for it, without the assistance of the preachers." The petitioners were accordingly advised to go home, and leave the States to manage the affairs of the country.

(Bor, III. xxiii. 76.)

A few days later, a resolution upon the subject of the petition was passed by the States, printed, and sent to all the cities in the Province, with an order to the magistrates to summon the preachers before them, deliver them a copy of the resolution, warn them to keep their congregations in tranquillity and harmony, and, for their own part, to occupy themselves with praying, teaching, and preaching, and to allow the States and the magistrates to administer the government.

The resolution itself—which the preachers characterised as a rude answer to a courteous request—was conceived much in the spirit of Barneveld's original verbal reply. (See the documents in Bor, III. xxiii 76, 85 seq.)

They are beacons in the upward path of mankind. Never before, had so bold and wise a tribute to the genius of the reformation been paid by an organized community. Individuals walking in advance of their age had enunciated such truths, and their voices had seemed to die away, but, at last, a little, struggling, half-developed commonwealth had proclaimed the rights of conscience for all mankind—for Papists and Calvinists, Jews and Anabaptists—because “having a respect for differences in religious opinions, and leaving all churches in their freedom, they chose to compel no man’s conscience.”

On the constitutional question, the States commenced by an astounding absurdity. “These mischief-makers, moreover,” said they, “have not been ashamed to dispute, and to cause the Earl of Leicester to dispute, the lawful constitution of the Provinces; a matter which has not been *disputed for eight hundred years*.”¹

This was indeed to claim a respectable age for their republic. Eight hundred years took them back to the days of Charlemagne, in whose time it would have been somewhat difficult to detect a germ of their States-General and States-Provincial. That the constitutional government—consisting of nobles and of the *vroedschaps* of chartered cities—should have been in existence four hundred and seventeen years before the first charter had ever been granted to a city, was a very loose style of argument. Thomas Wilkes, in reply, might as well have traced the English parliament to Hengist and Horsa. “For eight hundred years,” they said, “Holland had been governed by Counts and Countesses, on whom the nobles and cities, as representing the States, had legally conferred sovereignty.”²

Now the first incorporated city of Holland and Zeeland that ever existed was Middelburg, which received its charter from Count William I. of Holland and Countess Joan of Flanders, in the year 1217. The first Count that had any legal or

¹ Bor, III. xxiii. 76-84. Meteren, xiv. 250-253. Kluit, II. 286, *seq.*

² Bor, Meteren, Kluit, *ubi sup.*

recognized authority was Dirk the First to whom Charles the Simple presented the territory of Holland, by letters-patent, in 922. Yet the States-General, in a solemn and eloquent document, gravely dated their own existence from the year 787, and claimed the regular possession and habitual delegation of sovereignty from that epoch down !

After this fabulous preamble, they proceeded to handle the matter of fact with logical precision. It was absurd, they said, that Mr. Wilkes and Lord Leicester should affect to confound the *persons* who appeared in the assembly with the States themselves ; as if those individuals claimed or exercised sovereignty. Any man who had observed what had been passing during the last fifteen years, knew very well that the supreme authority did not belong to the thirty or forty individuals who came to the meetings. . . . The nobles, by reason of their ancient dignity and splendid possessions, took counsel together over state matters, and then, appearing at the assembly, deliberated with the deputies of the cities. The cities had mainly one form of government—a college of counsellors, or wise men, 40, 32, 28, or 24 in number, of the most respectable out of the whole community. They were chosen for life, and vacancies were supplied by the colleges themselves out of the mass of citizens. These colleges¹ alone governed the city, and that which had been ordained by them was to be obeyed by all the inhabitants—a system against which there had never been any rebellion. The colleges again, united with those of the nobles, *represented* the whole state, the whole body of the population ; and no form of government could be imagined, they said, that could resolve, with a more thorough knowledge of the necessities of the country, or that could execute its resolves with more unity of

¹ "These colleges," says the document, "are as old as the cities ; or so old at least, that there is no memory left of their commencement."

Here, too, was a gross misstatement, for the colleges of Vroedschappen dated only from the time of Philip the Good—not much more than a century before the publication of this docu-

ment ; and the cities themselves, as organized corporations, were but 350 years old, at most. It is difficult to understand how such inaccuracies should find their way into so able a state-paper.

Compare Kluit, 'Holl. Staatsregering, II. 291.

purpose and decisive authority. To bring the colleges into an assembly could only be done by means of deputies. These deputies, chosen by their colleges, and properly instructed, were sent to the place of meeting. During the war they had always been commissioned to resolve in common on matters regarding the liberty of the land. These deputies, thus assembled, *represented*, by commission, the States ; but they are not, in their own persons, the States ; and no one of them had any such pretension. "The people of this country," said the States, "have an aversion to all ambition ; and in these disastrous times, wherein nothing but trouble and odium is to be gathered by public employment, these commissions are accounted *munera necessaria*. . . . This form of government has, by God's favour, protected Holland and Zeeland, during this war, against a powerful foe, without loss of territory, without any popular outbreak, without military mutiny, because all *business has been transacted with open doors* ; and because the very smallest towns are all represented, and vote in the assembly."¹

In brief, the constitution of the United Provinces was a matter of fact. It was there in good working order, and had, for a generation of mankind, and throughout a tremendous war, done good service. Judged by the principles of reason and justice, it was in the main a wholesome constitution, securing the independence and welfare of the state, and the liberty and property of the individual, as well certainly as did any polity then existing in the world. It seemed more hopeful to abide by it yet a little longer than to adopt the throat-cutting system by the people, recommended by Wilkes and Leicester as an improvement on the old constitution. This was the view of Lord Buckhurst. He felt that threats of throat-cutting were not the best means of smoothing and conciliating, and he had come over to smooth and conciliate. "To spend the time," said he, "in private brabbles and piques between the States and Lord Leicester, when we ought to prepare an army against the enemy, and to repair the shaken

¹ Bor, Meteren, Kluit, *ubi sup.*

and torn state, is not a good course for her Majesty's service."¹ Letters were continually circulating from hand to hand among the antagonists of the Holland party, written out of England by Leicester, exciting the ill-will of the populace against the organized government. "By such means to bring the States into hatred," said Buckhurst, "and to stir up the people against them, tends to great damage and miserable end. This his Lordship doth full little consider, being the very way to dissolve all government, and so to bring all into confusion, and open the door for the enemy. But oh, how lamentable a thing it is, and how doth my Lord of Leicester abuse her Majesty, making her authority the means to uphold and justify, and under her name to defend and maintain, all his intolerable errors. I thank God that neither his might nor his malice shall deter me from laying open all those things which my conscience knoweth, and which appertaineth to be done for the good of this cause and of her Majesty's service. Herein, though I were sure to lose my life, yet will I not offend neither the one nor the other, knowing very well that I must die; and to die in her Majesty's faithful service, and with a good conscience, is far more happy than the miserable life that I am in. If Leicester do in this sort stir up the people against the States to follow his revenge against them, and if the Queen do yield no better aid, and the minds of Count Maurice and Hohenlo remain thus in fear and hatred of him, what good end or service can be hoped for here?"²

Buckhurst was a man of unimpeached integrity and gentle manners. He had come over with the best intentions towards the governor-general, and it has been seen that he boldly defended him in his first interviews with the States. But as the intrigues and underhand plottings of the Earl's agents were revealed to him, he felt more and more convinced that there was a deep laid scheme to destroy the government, and to constitute a virtual and absolute sovereignty for Leicester. It was not wonderful that the States were standing vigorously on the defensive.

¹ Buckhurst to Walsingham, 13th June, 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, D. I. p. 95, MS.)

² Ibid.

The subtle Deventer, Leicester's evil genius, did not cease to poison the mind of the governor, during his protracted absence, against all persons who offered impediments to the cherished schemes of his master and himself. "Your Excellency knows very well," he said, "that the state of this country is democratic, since, by failure of a prince, the sovereign disposition of affairs has returned to the people. That same people is everywhere so incredibly affectionate towards you that the delay in your return drives them to extreme despair. Any one who would know the real truth has but to remember the fine fear the States-General were in when the news of your displeasure about the 4th February letter became known."¹

Had it not been for the efforts of Lord Buckhurst in calming the popular rage, Deventer assured the Earl that the writers of the letter would "have scarcely saved their skins;" and that they had always continued in great danger.

He vehemently urged upon Leicester the necessity of his immediate return—not so much for reasons drawn from the distracted state of the country, thus left to a provisional government and torn by faction—but because of the facility with which he might at once seize upon arbitrary power. He gratified his master by depicting in lively colours the abject condition into which Barneveld, Maurice, Hohenlo, and similar cowards, would be thrown by his sudden return.

"If," said he, "the States' members and the counts, every one of them, are so desperately afraid of the people, even while your Excellency is afar off, in what trepidation will they be when you are here! God, reason, the affection of the sovereign people, are on your side. There needs, in a little commonwealth like ours, but a wink of the eye, the slightest indication of dissatisfaction on your part, to take away all their valour from men who are only brave where swords are too short. A magnanimous prince like yourself should seek at once the place where such plots are hatching, and you would

¹ G. de Proninck (Deventer) au Comte de Leycestra, 22 May, 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, D. I. p. 16, MS.)

see the fury of the rebels change at once to cowardice. There is more than one man here in the Netherlands that brags of what he will do against the greatest and most highly endowed prince in England, because he thinks he shall never see him again, who, at the very first news of your return, my Lord, would think only of packing his portmanteau, greasing his boots, or, at the very least, of sneaking back into his hole."¹

But the sturdy democrat was quite sure that his Excellency, that most magnanimous prince of England would not desert his faithful followers—thereby giving those "filthy rascals," his opponents, a triumph, and "doing so great an injury to the sovereign people, who were ready to get rid of them all at a single blow, if his Excellency would but say the word."²

He then implored the magnanimous prince to imitate the example of Moses, Joshua, David, and that of all great emperors and captains, Hebrew, Greek, and Roman, to come at once to the scene of action, and to smite his enemies hip and thigh. He also informed his Excellency, that if the delay should last much longer, he would lose all chance of regaining power, because the sovereign people had quite made up their mind to return to the dominion of Spain within three months, if they could not induce his Excellency to rule over them. In that way at least, if in no other, they could circumvent those filthy rascals whom they so much abhorred, and frustrate the designs of Maurice, Hohenlo, and Sir John Norris, who were represented as occupying the position of the triumvirs after the death of Julius Cæsar.

To place its neck under the yoke of Philip II. and the Inquisition, after having so handsomely got rid of both, did not

¹ "Tel bravera es Pays Bas contre le plus grand et qualifié prince d'Angleterre, lequel il d'assure ne revoir jamais pardega, qui aux dernieres nouvelles de votre retour, Monseigneur, ne pensoit qu'à trousseur bagage et faire graisser ses bottes, ou du moins se desrober en sa taniere," &c. (G. de Proninck. MS. last cited.)

² "Mais un prince si tres magnanime, ne fera jamais ce tort ny a soy

mesme, ni au bon peuple belgique. Point a soy mesme, comme s'il avait cédé a la bravade des pourceux, dont toute sa posterité et histoires et memoires du temps a venir portera l'ignominie. Point au peuple, lequel, comme souverain, ne doit recevoir la tort de cette injure, puisque ne luy que l'information de vostre mescontentement pour se desfaire en un coup de ces obstacle," &c. (Ibid.)

seem a sublime manifestation of sovereignty on the part of the people, and even Deventer had some misgivings as to the propriety of such a result. "What then will become of our beautiful churches?" he cried, "What will princes say, what will the world in general say, what will historians say, about the honour of the English nation?"¹

As to the first question, it is probable that the prospect of the reformed churches would not have been cheerful, had the inquisition been re-established in Holland and Utrecht, three months after that date. As to the second, the world and history were likely to reply, that the honour of the English nation was fortunately not entirely entrusted at that epoch to the "magnanimous prince" of Leicester, and his democratic counsellor-in-chief, burgomaster Deventer.

These are but samples of the ravings which sounded incessantly in the ears of the governor-general. Was it strange that a man, so thirsty for power, so gluttonous of flattery, should be influenced by such passionate appeals? Addressed in strains of fulsome adulation, convinced that arbitrary power was within his reach, and assured that he had but to wink his eye to see his enemies scattered before him, he became impatient of all restraint, and determined, on his return, to crush the States into insignificance.

Thus, while Buckhurst had been doing his best as a mediator to prepare the path for his return, Leicester himself and his partisans had been secretly exerting themselves to make his arrival the signal for discord, perhaps of civil war. The calm, then, immediately succeeding the mission of Buckhurst, was a deceitful one; but it seemed very promising. The best feelings were avowed and perhaps entertained. The

¹ "Il plaira a V. Exc^e de nous voir incontinent Espagnol, ou de nous en conserver par l'empeschement de ce desseing. . . . Car il ne peut tomber en aucune imagination raisnable, en cas que ce desseing ne se renverse tout subit, que faute d'autorité jointe, un desespoir extreme ne nous rende a l'Espagnol devant l'issue de trois mois. Que sera ce alors de nos

pauvres delaissez? Que deviendront ces belles eglises, que dira le monde, que diront les princes, que diront les historiens, de l'honneur de la nation Anglaise? Le desespoir enragé du peuple choisira plutot quel parti que ce soit avec l'Espagnol, que d'endurer ceux qui leur auront renversé le retour de Votre Excellence," &c. (G. de Proinck, MS. just cited.)

States professed great devotion to her Majesty and friendly regard for the governor. They distinctly declared that the arrangements by which Maurice and Hohenlo had been placed in their new positions were purely provisional ones, subject to modifications on the arrival of the Earl.¹ "All things are reduced to a quiet calm," said Buckhurst, "ready to receive my Lord of Leicester and his authority, whenever he cometh."²

The quarrel of Hohenlo with Sir Edward Norris had been, by the exertions of Buckhurst, amicably arranged:³ the Count became an intimate friend of Sir John, "to the gladding of all such as wished well to the country;"⁴ but he nourished a deadly hatred to the Earl. He ran up and down like a madman whenever his return was mentioned.⁵ "If the Queen be willing to take the sovereignty," he cried out at his own dinner-table to a large company, "and is ready to proceed roundly in this action, I will serve her to the last drop of my blood; but if she embrace it in no other sort than hitherto she hath done, and if Leicester is to return, then am I as good a man as Leicester, and will never be commanded by him. I mean to continue on my frontier, where all who love me can come and find me."⁶

He declared to several persons that he had detected a plot on the part of Leicester to have him assassinated; and the assertion seemed so important, that Villiers came to Councillor Clerk to confer with him on the subject. The worthy Bartholomew, who had again, most reluctantly, left his quiet chambers in the Temple to come again among the guns and drums, which his soul abhorred, was appalled by such a charge.

¹ Wilkes to Walsingham, 8 April, 1587. Same to same, 13 and 19 April, 1587. Clerk to Burghley, 12 April, 1587. (S. P. Office MSS.)

² Buckhurst to Burghley, 19 April, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Wilkes to Walsingham, 8 April, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Memorandum of a speech between the Lord Buckhurst and Count Hohenlo, 17 April, 1587. (Br. Mus. Galba, xi. 345, MS.)

⁵ Otheman to Walsingham, 23rd

March, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁶ Wilkes to Walsingham, 29 April, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

"Hohenlo is their Hercules," said Wilkes, "and a man fit for any desperate attempt, altogether directed by Barneveld and Paul Buys, who seeks (viz. P. B.) by all manner of devices to be revenged of Lord Leicester for his imprisonment." Wilkes to the Queen, 12 July, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

It was best to keep it a secret, he said, at least till the matter could be thoroughly investigated. Villiers was of the same opinion, and accordingly the councillor, in the excess of his caution, confided the secret only—to whom? To Mr. Atye, Leicester's private secretary. Atye, of course, instantly told his master—his master, in a frenzy of rage, told the Queen, and her Majesty, in a paroxysm of royal indignation at this new insult to her favourite, sent furious letters to her envoys, to the States-General, to everybody in the Netherlands—so that the assertion of Hohenlo became the subject of endless recrimination. Leicester became very violent, and denounced the statement as an impudent falsehood, devised wilfully in order to cast odium upon him and to prevent his return.¹ Unquestionably there was nothing in the story but table-talk; but the Count would have been still more ferocious towards Leicester than he was, had he known what was actually happening at that very moment.

While Buckhurst was at Utrecht, listening to the "solemn speeches" of the militia-captains and exchanging friendly expressions at stately banquets with Moeurs, he suddenly received a letter in cipher from her Majesty. Not having the key, he sent to Wilkes at the Hague. Wilkes was very ill; but the despatch was marked pressing and immediate, so he got out of bed and made the journey to Utrecht. The letter, on being deciphered, proved to be an order from the Queen to decoy Hohenlo into some safe town, on pretence of consultation, and then to throw him into prison, on the ground that he had been tampering with the enemy, and was about to betray the republic to Philip.²

¹ 'Effect of what passed between Dr. Villiers and me, Bartholomew Clerk, touching the discontentment of Count Hohenlo.' 22 May, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

Wilkes to Lord Chancellor, 3 June, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.) Compare letters of Leicester to Sonoy, and of Buckhurst to Tresalong, in *Bor.* II. *xxii.* 992. *Groen v. Prinst.* Archives I. 63, 68, 69.

² Queen to Buckhurst, 15 April,

1587. Wilkes to Walsingham, 29th April, 1587. Buckhurst to same, 29 April, 1587. Same to same, 30th April, 1587. (S. P. Office MSS.)

The Queen's Letter is as follows:—"Finding by a later letter written to our secretary by our ambassador Wilkes, that he hath been given to understand how Hollock should have some secret intelligence with the Prince of Parma, which being true,

The commotion which would have been excited by any attempt to enforce this order, could be easily imagined by those familiar with Hohenlo and with the powerful party in the Netherlands of which he was one of the chiefs. Wilkes stood aghast as he deciphered the letter. Buckhurst felt the impossibility of obeying the royal will. Both knew the cause, and both foresaw the consequences of the proposed step. Wilkes had heard some rumours of intrigues between Parma's agents at Deventer and Hohenlo, and had confided them to Walsingham, hoping that the Secretary would keep the matter in his own breast, at least till further advice. He was appalled at the sudden action proposed on a mere rumour, which both Buckhurst and himself had begun to consider an idle one. He protested, therefore, to Walsingham that to comply with her Majesty's command would not only be nearly impossible, but would, if successful, hazard the ruin of the republic. Wilkes was also very anxious lest the Earl of Leicester should hear of the matter. He was already the object of hatred to that powerful personage, and thought him capable of accomplishing his destruction in any mode. But if Leicester could wreak his vengeance upon his enemy Wilkes by the hand of his other deadly enemy Hohenlo, the councillor felt that this kind of revenge would have a double sweetness for him. The Queen knows what I have been saying, thought Wilkes, and therefore Leicester knows it; and if Leicester knows it, he will take care that Hohenlo shall hear of it too, and then wo

considering how the said Hollock is possessed of divers principal towns, in the which the captains and soldiers are altogether at his devotion, it is greatly to be doubted that he may be drawn by corruption to deliver up into the Prince of Parma's hands the said towns, whereby the enemy may have the more easy entry into those countries. We have therefore thought good, for prevention thereof, that you should confer with our servants Colonel Norris and Wilkes what course were meet to be taken therein, which, as we perceive, may be best performed by staying of the person of Hollock; wherein, before the execu-

tion thereof, especial care would be had that he might be drawn, under colour of conference with you about matters of great importance contained in certain letters sent from us unto you in great diligence, into some of the towns which you shall understand to be devoted to us, and not affected to him; wherein you may take order for his restraint, being first well furnished with sufficient matter to charge him withal, which we wish to be done in the presence of such principal persons of the country as are held for good patriots and have credit with the people."

be unto me. "Your honour knoweth," he said to Walsingham, "that her Majesty *can hold no secrets, and if she do impart it to Leicester, then am I sped.*"¹

Nothing came of it however, and the relations of Wilkes and Buckhurst with Hohenlo continued to be friendly. It was a lesson to Wilkes to be more cautious even with the cautious Walsingham. "We had but bare suspicions," said Buckhurst, "nothing fit, God knoweth, to come to such a reckoning. Wilkes saith he meant it but for a premonition to you there; but I think it will henceforth be a premonition to himself—there being but bare presumptions, and yet shrewd presumptions."²

Here then were Deventer and Leicester plotting to overthrow the government of the States; the States and Hohenlo arming against Leicester; the extreme democratic party threatening to go over to the Spaniards within three months; the Earl accused of attempting the life of Hohenlo; Hohenlo offering to shed the last drop of his blood for Queen Elizabeth; Queen Elizabeth giving orders to throw Hohenlo into prison as a traitor; Councillor Wilkes trembling for his life at the hands both of Leicester and Hohenlo; and Buckhurst doing his best to conciliate all parties, and imploring her Majesty in vain to send over money to help on the war, and to save her soldiers from starving.

For the Queen continued to refuse the loan of fifty thousand pounds which the provinces solicited, and in hope of which the States had just agreed to an extra contribution of a million florins (100,000*l.*), a larger sum than had been levied by a single vote since the commencement of the war. It must be remembered, too, that the whole expense of the war fell upon Holland and Zeeland. The Province of Utrecht, where there was so strong a disposition to confer absolute authority upon Leicester, and to destroy the power of the States-General, contributed absolutely nothing. Since the loss of Deventer, nothing could be raised in the Provinces of

¹ Wilkes to Walsingham, 29 April, 1587.

² Buckhurst to Wilkes, 29 April, MS. already cited.

Utrecht, Gelderland, or Overijssel; the Spaniards levying black mail upon the whole territory, and impoverishing the inhabitants till they became almost a nullity.¹ Was it strange then that the States of Holland and Zeeland, thus bearing nearly the whole burden of the war, should be dissatisfied with the hatred felt toward them by their sister Provinces so generously protected by them? Was it unnatural that Barneveld, and Maurice, and Hohenlo, should be disposed to bridle the despotic inclinations of Leicester, thus fostered by those who existed, as it were, at their expense?

But the Queen refused the 50,000*l.*, although Holland and Zeeland had voted the 100,000*l.* "No reason that breedeth charges," sighed Walsingham, "can in any sort be digested."²

It was not for want of vehement entreaty on the part of the Secretary of State and of Buckhurst that the loan was denied. At least she was entreated to send over money for her troops, who for six months past were unpaid. "Keeping the money in your coffers," said Buckhurst, "doth yield no interest to you, and—which is above all earthly respects—it shall be the means of preserving the lives of many of your faithful subjects which otherwise must needs daily perish. Their miseries, through want of meat and money, I do protest to God so much moves my soul with commiseration of that which is past, and makes my heart tremble to think of the like to come again, that I humbly beseech your Majesty, for Jesus Christ sake, to have compassion on their lamentable estate past, and send some money to prevent the like hereafter."³

These were moving words, but the money did not come—charges could not be digested.

"The eternal God," cried Buckhurst, "incline your heart to grant the petition of the States for the loan of the 50,000*l.*, and that speedily, for the dangerous terms of the State here and the mighty and forward preparation of the enemy admit no minute of delay, so that even to grant it slowly is to deny it utterly."⁴

¹ Wilkes to Walsingham, 15 May, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Walsingham to Wilkes, 2 May,

⁴ Buckhurst to the Queen, 19 April 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁵ *Ibid.*

He then drew a vivid picture of the capacity of the Netherlands to assist the endangered realm of England, if delay were not suffered to destroy both commonwealths, by placing the Provinces in an enemy's hand.

"Their many and notable good havens," he said, "the great number of ships and mariners, their impregnable towns, if they were in the hands of a potent prince that would defend them, and, lastly, the state of this shore, so near and opposite unto the land and coast of England—lo, the sight of all this daily in mine eye, conjoined with the deep, enrooted malice of that your so mighty enemy who seeketh to regain them ; these things entering continually into the meditations of my heart—so much do they import the safety of yourself and your estate—do enforce me, in the abundance of my love and duty to your Majesty, most earnestly to *speake, write, and weep unto you*, lest when the occasion yet offered shall be gone by, this blessed means of your defence, by God's provident goodness thus put into your hand, will then be utterly lost, lo, never, never more to be recovered again."¹

It was a noble, wise, and eloquent appeal, but it was uttered in vain. Was not Leicester—his soul filled with petty schemes for reigning in Utrecht, and destroying the constitutional government of the Provinces—in full possession of the royal ear? And was not the same ear lent, at that most critical moment, to the insidious Alexander Farnese, with his whispers of peace, which were potent enough to drown all the preparations for the invincible Armada?

Six months had rolled away since Leicester had left the Netherlands ; six months long, the Provinces, left in a condition which might have become anarchy, had been saved by the wise government of the States-General ; six months long the English soldiers had remained unpaid by their sovereign ; and now for six weeks the honest, eloquent, intrepid, but gentle Buckhurst had done his best to conciliate all parties, and to mould the Netherlanders into an impregnable bulwark for the realm of England. But his efforts were treated with

¹ Buckhurst to the Queen, MS. just cited.

scorn by the Queen. She was still maddened by a sense of the injuries done by the States to Leicester. She was indignant that her envoy should have accepted such lame apologies for the 4th of February letter; that he should have received no better atonement for their insolent infringements of the Earl's orders during his absence; that he should have excused their contemptuous proceedings and that, in short, he should have been willing to conciliate and forgive when he should have stormed and railed. "You conceived, it seemeth," said her Majesty, "that a more sharper manner of proceeding would have exasperated matters to the prejudice of the service, and therefore you did think it more fit to wash the wounds rather with water than vinegar, wherein we would rather have wished, on the other side, that you had better considered that feasting wounds had more need of corrosives than lenitives. Your own judgment ought to have taught that such a slight and mild kind of dealing with a people so ingrate and void of consideration as the said Estates have showed themselves toward us, is the ready way to increase their contempt."¹

The envoy might be forgiven for believing that at any rate there would be no lack of corrosives or vinegar, so long as the royal tongue or pen could do their office, as the unfortunate deputies had found to their cost in their late interviews at Greenwich, and as her own envoys in the Netherlands were perpetually finding now.² The Queen was especially indignant that the Estates should defend the tone of their letters to the Earl on the ground that he had written a piquant epistle to them. "But you can manifestly see their untruths in naming it a piquant letter," said Elizabeth, "for it has no sour or sharp word therein, nor any clause or reprehension, but is full of gravity and gentle admonition. It deserved a thankful answer, and so you may maintain it to them to their reproof."³

The States doubtless thought that the loss of Deventer

¹ Queen to Buckhurst, 3 May, 1587.
(Br. Mus. Galba, D. I. 4, MS.)

² Leicester to Walsingham.

³ Queen to Buckhurst. (MS. last cited.)

and, with it, the almost ruinous condition of three out of the seven Provinces, might excuse on their part a little piquancy of phraseology, nor was it easy for them to express gratitude to the governor for his grave and gentle admonitions, after he had, by his secret document of 24th November, rendered himself fully responsible for the disaster they deplored.

She expressed unbounded indignation with Hohenlo, who, as she was well aware, continued to cherish a deadly hatred for Leicester. Especially she was exasperated, and with reason, by the assertion the Count had made concerning the governor's murderous designs upon him. "'Tis a matter," said the Queen, "so foul and dishonourable that doth not only touch greatly the credit of the Earl, but also our own honour, to have one who hath been nourished and brought up by us, and of whom we have made show to the world to have extraordinarily favoured above any other of our own subjects, and used his service in those countries in a place of that reputation he held there, stand charged with so horrible and unworthy a crime. And therefore our pleasure is, even as you tender the continuance of our favour towards you, that you seek, by all the means you may, examining the Count Hollock, or any other party in this matter, to discover and to sift out how this malicious imputation hath been wrought; for we have reason to think that it hath grown out of some cunning device to stay the Earl's coming, and to discourage him from the continuance of his service in those countries."¹

And there the Queen was undoubtedly in the right. Hohenlo was resolved, if possible, to make the Earl's government of the Netherlands impossible. There was nothing in the story however; and all that by the most diligent "sifting" could ever be discovered, and all that the Count could be prevailed upon to confess, was an opinion expressed by him that if he had gone with Leicester to England, it might perhaps have fared ill with him.² But men were given to loose talk in those countries. There was great freedom of tongue

¹ Queen to Buckhurst, MS. just cited.

² Buckhurst to Walsingham, 13th June, 1687. (Br. Mus. Galba. D. I. 96, MS.)

and pen ; and as the Earl, whether with justice or not, had always been suspected of strong tendencies to assassination, it was not very wonderful that so reckless an individual as Hohenlo should promulgate opinions on such subjects, without much reserve. "The number of crimes that have been imputed to me," said Leicester, "would be incomplete, had this calumny not been added to all preceding ones."¹ It is possible that assassination, especially poisoning, may have been a more common-place affair in those days than our own. At any rate, it is certain that accusations of such crimes were of ordinary occurrence. Men were apt to die suddenly if they had mortal enemies, and people would gossip. At the very same moment, Leicester was deliberately accused not only of murderous intentions towards Hohenlo, but towards Thomas Wilkes and Count Lewis William of Nassau likewise. A trumpeter, arrested in Friesland, had just confessed that he had been employed by the Spanish governor of that Province, Colonel Verdugo, to murder Count Lewis, and that four other persons had been entrusted with the same commission. The Count wrote to Verdugo, and received in reply an indignant denial of the charge. "Had I heard of such a project," said the Spaniard, "I would, on the contrary, have given you warning. And I give you one now." He then stated, as a fact known to him on unquestionable authority, that the Earl or Leicester had assassins at that moment in his employ to take the life of Count Lewis, adding that as for the trumpeter, who had just been hanged for the crime suborned by the writer, he was a most notorious lunatic. In reply, Lewis, while he ridiculed this plea of insanity set up for a culprit who had confessed his crime succinctly and voluntarily, expressed great contempt for the counter-charge against Leicester. "His Excellency," said the sturdy little Count, "is a virtuous gentleman, the most pious and God-fearing I have ever known. I am very sure that he could never treat his enemies in the manner stated, much less his friends. As for yourself, may God give me grace, in requital of your knavish trick, to

¹ Groen v. Prinst. Archives, I. 63. Compare Bor, II. xxii. 992.

make such a war upon you as becomes an upright soldier and a man of honour."¹

Thus there was at least one man—and a most important one—in the opposition-party who thoroughly believed in the honour of the governor-general.

The Queen then proceeded to lecture Lord Buckhurst very severely for having tolerated an instant the States' proposition to her for a loan of 50,000*l*. "The enemy," she observed, "is quite unable to attempt the siege of any town."²

Buckhurst was, however, instructed, in case the States' million should prove insufficient to enable the army to make head against the enemy, and in the event of "any alteration of the good-will of the people towards her, caused by her not yielding, in this their necessity, some convenient support," to let them then understand, "as of himself, that if they would be satisfied with a loan of *ten or fifteen thousand pounds*, he would do his best endeavour to draw her Majesty to yield unto the furnishing of such a sum, with assured hope to obtain the same at her hands."³

Truly Walsingham was right in saying that charges of any kind were difficult of digestion. Yet, even at that moment, Elizabeth had no more attached subjects in England than were the burghers of the Netherlands, who were as anxious as ever to annex their territory to her realms.

Thus, having expressed an affection for Leicester which no one doubted, having once more thoroughly brow-beaten the States, and having soundly lectured Buckhurst—as a requital for his successful efforts to bring about a more wholesome condition of affairs—she gave the envoy a parting stab, with this postscript;—"There is small disproportion," she said "betwixt a fool who useth not wit because he hath it not, and him that useth it not when it should avail him."⁴ Leicester, too, was very violent in his attacks upon Buckhurst. The envoy had succeeded in reconciling Hohenlo with the bro-

¹ Letters of Verdugo and of Count Lewis William, in Bor. III. xxiii. p. 11.

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² Queen to Buckhurst, 3 May (MS. last cited.)

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

thers Norris, and had persuaded Sir John to offer the hand of friendship to Leicester, provided it were sure of being accepted. Yet in this desire to conciliate, the Earl found renewed cause for violence. "I would have had more regard of my Lord of Buckhurst," he said, "if the case had been between him and Norris, but I must regard my own reputation the more that I see others would impair it. You have deserved little thanks of me, if I must deal plainly, who do equal me after this sort with him, whose best place is colonel under me, and once my servant, and preferred by me to all honourable place he had."¹ And thus were enterprises of great moment, intimately affecting the safety of Holland, of England, of all Protestantism, to be suspended between triumph and ruin, in order that the spleen of one individual—one Queen's favourite—might be indulged. The contempt of an insolent grandee for a distinguished commander—himself the son of a Baron, with a mother the dear friend of her sovereign—was to endanger the existence of great commonwealths. Can the influence of the individual, for good or bad, upon the destinies of the race be doubted, when the characters and conduct of Elizabeth and Leicester, Burghley and Walsingham, Philip and Parma, are closely scrutinized and broadly traced throughout the wide range of their effects?

"And I must now, in your Lordship's sight," continued Leicester, "be made a counsellor with this companion, who never yet to this day hath done so much as take knowledge of my mislike of him; no, not to say this much, which I think would well become his better, that he was sorry to hear I had mislike to him, that he desired my suspension till he might either speak with me, or be charged from me, and if then he were not able to satisfy me, he would acknowledge his fault, and make me any honest satisfaction. This manner of dealing would have been no disparagement to his better. And even so I must think that your Lordship doth me wrong, knowing what you do, to make so little difference between John Norris, my man not long since, and now but my colonel

¹ Leicester to Buckhurst, 30 April, 1587. (S. P. Office, MS.)

under me, as though we were equals. And I cannot but more than marvel at this your proceeding, when I remember your promises of friendship, and your opinions resolutely set down. . . . You were so determined before you went hence, but must have become wonderfully enamoured of those men's unknown virtues in a few days of acquaintance, from the alteration that is grown by their own commendations of themselves. You know very well that all the world should not make me serve with John Norris. Your sudden change from dislike to liking has, by consequence, presently cast disgrace upon me. But all is not gold that glitters, nor every shadow a perfect representation. . . . You knew he should not serve with me, but either you thought me a very inconstant man, or else a very simple soul, resolving with you as I did, for you to take the course you have done."¹ He felt, however, quite strong in her Majesty's favour. He knew himself her favourite, beyond all chance or change, and was sure, so long as either lived, to thrust his enemies, by her aid, into outer darkness. Woe to Buckhurst, and Norris, and Wilkes, and all others who consorted with his enemies. Let them flee from the wrath to come! And truly they were only too anxious to do so, for they knew that Leicester's hatred was poisonous. "He is not so facile to forget as ready to revenge,"² said poor Wilkes, with neat alliteration. "My very heavy and mighty adversary will disgrace and undo me."³

"It sufficeth," continued Leicester, "that her Majesty doth find my dealings well enough, and so, I trust will graciously use me. As for the reconciliations and love-days you have made there, truly I have liked well of it; for you did show me your disposition therein before, and I allowed of it, and I had received letters both from Count Maurice and Hohenlo of their humility and kindness, but now in your last letters you say they have uttered the cause of their dislike

¹ Leicester to Buckhurst. The letter is from Croydon, and pathetically signed, "Your poor friend, R. Leicester."

² Wilkes to Walsingham, 13 April, 1587. (S. P. Office, MS.)

³ Same to the Lord Chancellor, 3rd June, 1587. (S. P. Office, MS.)

towards me, which you forbear to write of, looking so speedily for my return."¹

But the Earl knew well enough what the secret was, for had it not been specially confided by the judicious Bartholomew to Atye, who had incontinently told his master? "This pretense that I should kill Hohenlo," cried Leicester, "is a matter properly foisted in to bring me to choler. I will not suffer it to rest thus. Its authors shall be duly and severely punished. And albeit I see well enough the plot of this wicked device, yet shall it not work the effect the devisers have done it for. No, my Lord, he is a villain and a false lying knave whosoever he be, and of what nation soever that hath forged this device. Count Hohenlo doth know I never gave him cause to fear me so much. There were ways and means offered me to have quitted him of the country if I had so liked. This new monstrous villany which is now found out I do hate and detest, as I would look for the right judgment of God to fall upon myself, if I had but once imagined it. All this makes good proof of Wilkes's good dealing with me, that hath heard of so vile and villainous a reproach of me, and never gave me knowledge. But I trust your Lordship shall receive her Majesty's order for this, as for a matter that toucheth herself in honour, and me her poor servant and minister, as dearly as any matter can do; and I will so take it and use it to the uttermost."²

We have seen how anxiously Buckhurst had striven to do his duty upon a most difficult mission. Was it unnatural that so fine a nature as his should be disheartened, at reaping nothing but sneers and contumely from the haughty sovereign he served, and from the insolent favourite who controlled her councils? "I beseech your Lordship," he said to Burghley, "keep one ear for me, and do not hastily condemn me before you hear mine answer. For if I ever did or shall do any acceptable service to her Majesty, it was in the stay and appeasing of these countries, ever ready at my coming to have cast off all good respect towards us, and to have entered even

¹ Leicester to Buckhurst, 30 April. (MS. already cited.)

² Ibid.

into some desperate cause. In the meantime I am hardly thought of by her Majesty, and in her opinion condemned before mine answer be understood. Therefore I beseech you to help me to return, and not thus to lose her Majesty's favour for my good desert, wasting here my mind, body, my wits, wealth, and all, with continual toils, cares, and troubles, more than I am able to endure."¹

But besides his instructions to smooth and expostulate, in which he had succeeded so well, and had been requited so ill, Buckhurst had received a still more difficult commission. He had been ordered to broach the subject of peace, as delicately as possible, but without delay; first sounding the leading politicians, inducing them to listen to the Queen's suggestions on the subject, persuading them that they ought to be satisfied with the principles of the pacification of Ghent, and that it was hopeless for the Provinces to continue the war with their mighty adversary any longer.²

Most reluctantly had Buckhurst fulfilled his sovereign's

¹ Buckhurst to Burghley, 27 May, 1587. (S. P. Office, MS.)

² "Whereas we have late used your service in an intended treaty of peace betwixt the King of Spain and us, dealt in by the Duke of Parma . . . we send you copies of such letters as have lately been written to ourself by the Duke, and by Champagny to the Controller. . . . We have taken order that the Duke shall be put in mind of the treaty of Ghent, anno '76, . . . which being afterwards approved by the King, was published in 1577, . . . having just cause to hope that, if the King be willing to embrace peace, and the Duke to further the same, as he pretendeth, he may be induced to assent to such a tolerance as in the said pacification is contained. Now it resteth that you should seek to frame the minds of the people of those countries to such good means as by you shall be thought expedient to content themselves with the said tolerance; for which purpose you shall, as of yourself, as one that wisheth well to those countries, deal with some well-chosen persons there, such as you shall learn to be good

patriots, . . . laying before them how impossible it is for them by means of their contributions, with the burden whereof the people do already find themselves so much grieved to continue the war, and to make head any longer against so mighty and puissant a prince as the King of Spain, and how unable ourselves shall be to supply them still with such relief as the necessity of their state shall require. . . . You may advise them to dispose both their own minds and those of the people to a sound peace, which, in your opinion, they cannot at any time treat of with greater advantage than at this present, the King of Spain being *at so low an ebb* both at home and in these countries, for want as well of virtuales as of other necessary things to continue the wars. . . . And if you shall find that the using of these reasons and persuasions *in our name* may further the cause by moving them rather to hearken unto peace, we leave it to yourself to use, in such case, your own discretion therein." &c. Queen to Buckhurst, May, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

commands in this disastrous course. To talk to the Hollanders of the Ghent pacification seemed puerile. That memorable treaty, ten years before, had been one of the great landmarks of progress, one of the great achievements of William the Silent. By its provisions, public exercise of the reformed religion had been secured for the two Provinces of Holland and Zeeland, and it had been agreed that the secret practice of those rites should be elsewhere winked at, until such time as the States-General, under the auspices of Philip II., should otherwise ordain. But was it conceivable that now,—after Philip's authority had been solemnly abjured, and the reformed worship had become the public, dominant religion, throughout all the Provinces,—the whole republic should return to the Spanish dominion, and to such toleration as might be sanctioned by an assembly professing loyalty to the most Catholic King?

Buckhurst had repeatedly warned the Queen, in fervid and eloquent language, as to the intentions of Spain. "There was never peace well made," he observed, "without a mighty war preceding, and always, the sword in hand is the best pen to write the conditions of peace."

"If ever prince had cause," he continued, "to think himself beset with doubt and danger, you, sacred Queen, have most just cause not only to think it, but even certainly to believe it. The Pope doth daily plot nothing else but how he may bring to pass your utter overthrow; the French King hath already sent you threatenings of revenge, and though for that pretended cause I think little will ensue, yet he is blind that seeth not the mortal dislike that boileth deep in his heart for other respects against you. The Scottish King, not only in regard of his future hope, but also by reason of some over conceit in his heart, may be thought a dangerous neighbour to you. The King of Spain armeth and extendeth all his power to ruin both you and your estate. And if the Indian gold have corrupted also the King of Denmark, and made him likewise Spanish, as I marvellously fear; why will not your Majesty, beholding the flames of your enemies on every side kindling around, *unlock all your coffers and convert your*

treasure for the advancing of worthy men, and for the arming of ships and men-of-war that may defend you, since princes' treasures serve only to that end, and, lie they never so fast or so full in their chests, can no ways so defend them?

"The eternal God, in whose hands the hearts of kings do rest, dispose and guide your sacred Majesty to do that which may be most according to His blessed will, and best for you, as I trust He will, even for His mercy's sake, both toward your Majesty and the whole realm of England, whose desolation is thus sought and compassed."¹

Was this the language of a mischievous intriguer, who was sacrificing the true interest of his country, and whose proceedings were justly earning for him rebuke and disgrace at the hands of his sovereign? Or was it rather the noble advice of an upright statesman, a lover of his country, a faithful servant of his Queen, who had looked through the atmosphere of falsehood in which he was doing his work, and who had detected, with rare sagacity, the secret purposes of those who were then misruling the world?

Buckhurst had no choice, however, but to obey. His private efforts were of course fruitless, but he announced to her Majesty that it was his intention very shortly to bring the matter—according to her wish—before the assembly.

But Elizabeth, seeing that her counsel had been unwise and her action premature, turned upon her envoy, as she was apt to do, and rebuked him for his obedience, so soon as obedience had proved inconvenient to herself.

"Having perused your letters," she said, "by which you so at large debate unto us what you have done in the matter of peace. . . . we find it strange that you should proceed further. And although we had given you full and ample direction to proceed to a public dealing in that cause, yet your own discretion, seeing the difficulties and dangers that you yourself saw in the propounding of the matter, ought to have led you to delay till further command from us."²

¹ Buckhurst to the Queen, 30 April, 1587. (Br. Mus. Galba, C. xi. p. 438, MS.)

² Queen to Buckhurst, 4 June, 1587. (S.P. Office MS.)

Her Majesty then instructed her envoy, in case he had not yet "propounded the matter in the state-house to the general assembly," to pause entirely until he heard her further pleasure. She concluded, as usual, with a characteristic postscript in her own hand.

"Oh weigh deeplier this matter," she said, "than, with so shallow a judgment, to spill the cause, impair my honour, and shame yourself, with all your wit, that once was supposed better than to lose a bargain for the handling."¹

Certainly the sphinx could have propounded no more puzzling riddles than those which Elizabeth thus suggested to Buckhurst. To make war without an army, to support an army without pay, to frame the hearts of a whole people to peace who were unanimous for war, and this without saying a word either in private or public; to dispose the Netherlands favourably to herself and to Leicester, by refusing them men and money, brow-beating them for asking for it, and subjecting them to a course of perpetual insults, which she called "corrosives," to do all this and more seemed difficult. If not to do it, were to spill the cause and to lose the bargain, it was more than probable that they would be spilt and lost.

But the ambassador was no Œdipus—although a man of delicate perceptions and brilliant intellect—and he turned imploringly to a wise counsellor for aid against the tormentor who chose to be so stony-faced and enigmatical.

"Touching the matter of peace," said he to Walsingham, "I have written somewhat to her Majesty in cipher, so as I am sure you will be called for to decipher it. *If you did know how infinitely her Majesty did at my departure and before—for in this matter of peace she hath specially used me this good while—command me, pray me, and persuade me to further and hasten the same with all the speed possible that might be, and how, on the other side, I have continually been the man and the mean that have most plainly dehorted her from such post-haste, and that she should never make good peace without a puissant army in the field, you would then say that*

¹ Queen to Buckhurst, MS. just cited.

I had now cause to fear her *displeasure for being too slow, and not too forward*. And as for all the reasons which in my last letters are set down, her Majesty hath debated them with me many times.”¹

And thus midsummer was fast approaching, the commonwealth was without a regular government, Leicester remained in England nursing his wrath and preparing his schemes, the Queen was at Greenwich, corresponding with Alexander Farnese, and sending riddles to Buckhurst, when the enemy—who, according to her Majesty, was “quite unable to attempt the siege of any town”—suddenly appeared in force in Flanders, and invested Sluys. This most important seaport, both for the destiny of the republic and of England at that critical moment, was insufficiently defended. It was quite time to put an army in the field, with a governor-general to command it.

On the 5th June there was a meeting of the state-council at the Hague. Count Maurice, Hohenlo, and Mœurs were present, besides several members of the States-General. Two propositions were before the council. The first was that it was absolutely necessary to the safety of the republic, now that the enemy had taken the field, and the important city of Sluys was besieged, for Prince Maurice to be appointed captain-general, until such time as the Earl of Leicester or some other should be sent by her Majesty. The second was to confer upon the state-council the supreme government in civil affairs, for the same period, and to repeal all limitations and restrictions upon the powers of the council made secretly by the Earl.

Chancellor Leoninus, “that grave, wise old man,” moved the propositions. The deputies of the States were requested to withdraw. The vote of each councillor was demanded. Buckhurst, who, as the Queen’s representative—together with Wilkes and John Norris—had a seat in the council, refused to vote. “It was a matter,” he discreetly observed, “with which he had not been instructed by her Majesty to

¹ Buckhurst to Walsingham, 13 June, 1587. (Br. Mus. Galba, D. I. 96. MS.)

intermeddle." Norris and Wilkes also begged to be excused from voting, and, although earnestly urged to do so by the whole council, persisted in their refusal. Both measures were then carried.¹

No sooner was the vote taken, than an English courier entered the council-chamber, with pressing despatches from Lord Leicester. The letters were at once read. The Earl announced his speedy arrival, and summoned both the States-General and the council to meet him at Dort, where his lodgings were already taken. All were surprised, but none more than Buckhurst, Wilkes, and Norris; for no intimation of this sudden resolution had been received by them, nor any answer given to various propositions, considered by her Majesty as indispensable preliminaries to the governor's visit.²

The council adjourned till after dinner, and Buckhurst held conference meantime with various counsellors and deputies. On the reassembling of the board, it was urged by Barneveld, in the name of the States, that the election of Prince Maurice should still hold good. "Although by these letters," said he, "it would seem that her Majesty had resolved upon the speedy return of his Excellency, yet, inasmuch as the counsels and resolutions of princes are often subject to change upon new occasion, it does not seem fit that our late purpose concerning Prince Maurice should receive any interruption."

Accordingly, after brief debate, both resolutions, voted in the morning, were confirmed in the afternoon.

"So now," said Wilkes, "Maurice is general of all the forces, *et quid sequetur nescimus*."³

But whatever else was to follow, it was very certain that Wilkes would not stay. His great enemy had sworn his destruction, and would now take his choice, whether to do him to death himself, or to throw him into the clutch of the ferocious Hohenlo. "As for my own particular," said the counsellor, "the word is go, whosoever cometh or cometh not,"⁴ and he announced to Walsingham his intention of departing

¹ Wilkes to Walsingham, 8 June, 1587. (S. P. Office, MS.)

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Wilkes to Walsingham, 29 April, 1587. (S. P. Office, MS.)

without permission, should he not immediately receive it from England. "I shall stay to be dandled with no love-days nor leave-takings," he observed.¹

¹ Wilkes to Walsingham, 8 June, 1587. (S. P. Office, MS.)

From the very moment of Leicester's arrival in England, he seems to have conceived a violent hatred to Councillor Wilkes. Yet a careful inspection of the correspondence shows that never was hatred more unjust. Wilkes had told the truth concerning the expenses incurred by England and the States during the Earl's first term of administration. He could not have done less without dereliction of duty, and he forwarded certified vouchers for all his statements. He always did his best to sustain the governor's character, and to carry out his legitimate views. As time wore on, he was obliged to state the disadvantages resulting from his protracted absence, and he was forced, at last, to admit the truth as to his great unpopularity. He even admitted privately, on one occasion, that, in consequence of that unpopularity, some other governor might be sent from England more acceptable to the Provinces. This was the sum of his offences in regard to Leicester. Towards the Queen he manifested himself an intelligent, honest, and most assiduous servant, but he had incurred the hostility of the favourite, and for that there was no redress. Even so early as January he felt that he had lost Leicester's favour, although he protested he "would repurchase it with the loss of his two best fingers" (Wilkes to Leicester, 27 Jan. 1587. S. P. Office, MS.); and he wrote at the same time to the Queen, complaining that he was in danger of his life, as recompense for his faithful service—a life which he hoped to venture in better sort for her Majesty's service. He was threatened at home, he said, and endangered abroad. Wilkes to the Queen, 30 Jan. 1587. (S. P. Office, MS.) A few months later, matters had grown much worse. Leicester was intending to wreak his revenge upon him by means of third persons, who, by his malignant insinuations, had been made hostile to the councillor.

"Whereunto is now added the danger of my poor life," he says, "and fortune, for that I am secretly given to understand, by a dear friend of mine, and inward with my great and heavy enemy, that he hath sworn and protested, even now of late, to take his revenge on me—how or in what sort I know not, but have good cause to doubt, considering the mind of my enemy, that he will not be satisfied with any mere offence to be done unto me, which I suppose he will never do of himself, nor by any of his own, but a third means, whereunto he hath a gap opened unto him by my own letters written unto him from hence, wherein I had touched some persons of quality here for their indirect proceeding against her Majesty and our nation Therefore, I humbly beseech you to move her Majesty for my speedy return." W. to Hatton, 19 April, 1587. (S. P. Office, MS.) In a letter to Walsingham of same date, he alluded to the "deadly revenge threatened against him by the Earl with very bitter words," and indicates the same scheme by which third persons are to inflict it. "I would be loth to commit myself to his mercy," he says; "your honour knoweth him better than I do. . . . God is my witness I have, since his departure from these countries, deserved as well of him as ever did any. . . . I will stand to my justification, and prove that I have done him with her Majesty as many good offices as any man that came from hence," and he then most urgently solicited permission to depart. This permission the government were most reluctant to grant, and Wilkes protested loudly against his continuance in office at such "hazard to his poor life, without means of defence, in the quality of his ruin or death." "'Tis a hard reward for my faithful services," he said, "to be left to the mercy of such as have will and means by revenge to bereave her Majesty of a true and obedient servant, and me of my life, in an obscure sort, to my perpetual infamy, to the pleasing

But Leicester had delayed his coming too long. The country felt that it had been trifled with by his absence—at so critical a period—of seven months. It was known too that the Queen was secretly treating with the enemy, and that Buckhurst had been privately sounding leading personages upon that subject, by her orders. This had caused a deep, suppressed indignation. Over and over again had the English government been warned as to the danger of delay. “Your length in resolving,” Wilkes had said, “whatsoever your secret purposes may be—will put us to new plunges before long.”¹ The mission of Buckhurst was believed to be “but a stale, having some other intent than was expressed.” And at last, the new plunge had been fairly taken. It seemed now impossible for Leicester to regain the absolute authority, which he coveted, and which he had for a brief season possessed. The States-General, under able leaders, had become used to a government which had been forced upon them, and which they had wielded with success. Holland and Zeeland, paying the whole expense of the war, were not likely to endure again the absolute sovereignty of a foreigner, guided by a backstairs council of reckless politicians—most of whom were unprincipled, and some of whom had been proved to be felons—and established at Utrecht, which contributed nothing to the

of mine enemies, and the discomforting of all honest men, by an example, from serving of her Majesty with sincerity,” &c. W. to Walsing. 29th April, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.) And he soon afterwards declared to Walsingham (15 May, 1587. S. P. Office, MS.) that, in case he should be left there to the mercy of his great enemy, if he returned, he would venture “to hazard her Majesty’s favour in returning home without license.” His alarm was no greater for his life than for his reputation, both which, Leicester, in his belief, was sworn to destroy. “I do find that my very heavy and mighty adversary,” he writes to the Lord Chancellor (3 June, 1587. S. P. Office, MS.), “doth perpetually travail with her Majesty to disgrace and undo me, and I have cause to doubt that he

doth or shall prevail against me, considering the goodness of her Majesty’s nature to be induced to believe whom she favoureth, and his subtlety to persuade. I have therefore no mean in respect of the great inequality between him and me, but either to be held up by my honourable friends, assisted with the wings of mine own integrity, or to fall to the ground with disgrace and infamy, to the discouragement of all that shall serve her Majesty in like places.”

Such passages paint the condition of the civil service in England, during the reign of Leicester and Elizabeth, more vividly than could be done by a long dissertation.

¹ Wilkes to Walsingham, 17 May, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

general purse. If Leicester were really coming, it seemed certain that he would be held to acknowledge the ancient constitution, and to respect the sovereignty of the States-General. It was resolved that he should be well bridled. The sensations of Barneveld and his party may therefore be imagined, when a private letter of Leicester to his secretary—"the fellow named Junius," as Hohenlo called him—having been intercepted at this moment, gave them an opportunity of studying the Earl's secret thoughts.

The Earl informed his correspondent that he was on the point of starting for the Netherlands. He ordered him therefore to proceed at once to reassure those whom he knew well disposed as to the good intentions of her Majesty and of the governor-general. And if, on the part of Lord Buckhurst or others, it should be intimated that the Queen was resolved to treat for peace with the King of Spain, and wished to have the opinion of the Netherlands on that subject, *he was to say boldly that Lord Buckhurst never had any such charge*, and that her Majesty had not been treating at all. She had only been attempting to sound the King's intentions towards the Netherlands, in case of any accord. Having received no satisfactory assurance on the subject, her Majesty was determined to proceed with the defence of these countries. This appeared by the expedition of Drake against Spain, and by the return of the Earl, with a good number of soldiers paid by her Majesty, over and above her ordinary subsidy.¹

"You are also," said the Earl, "to tell those who have the care of the people" (the ministers of the reformed church and others), "that I am returning, in the confidence that they will, in future, cause all past difficulties to cease, and that they will yield to me a legitimate authority, such as befits for administering the sovereignty of the Provinces, without my being obliged to endure all the oppositions and counterminings of the States, as in times past. The States must content themselves with retaining the power which they claim

¹ Leicester to Junius, Greenwich. | Compare Meteren, xiv. 255. Hooft,
15 June, 1587. (S. P. Office, MS.) | Vervolgh, 249, *et mult. al.*

to have exercised under the governors of the Emperor and the King—without attempting anything farther during my government—since I desire to do nothing of importance without the advice of the council, which will be composed legitimately of persons of the country. You will also tell them that her Majesty commands me to return unless I can obtain from the States the authority which is necessary, in order not to be governor in appearance only and on paper. And I wish that those who are good may be apprized of all this, in order that nothing may happen to their prejudice and ruin, and contrary to their wishes.”¹

There were two very obvious comments to be made upon this document. Firstly, the States—*de jure*, as they claimed, and *de facto* most unquestionably—were in the position of the Emperor and King. They were the sovereigns. The Earl wished them to content themselves with the power which they exercised under the Emperor’s governors. This was like requesting the Emperor, when in the Netherlands, to consider himself subject to his own governor. The second obvious reflection was that the Earl, in limiting his authority by a state-council, expected, no doubt, to appoint that body himself—as he had done before—and to allow the members only the right of talking, and of voting, without the power of enforcing their decisions. In short, it was very plain that Leicester meant to be more absolute than ever.

As to the flat contradiction given to Buckhurst’s proceedings in the matter of peace, that statement could scarcely deceive any one who had seen her Majesty’s letters and instructions to her envoy.

It was also a singularly deceitful course to be adopted by Leicester towards Buckhurst and towards the Netherlands, because his own private instructions, drawn up at the same moment, expressly enjoined him to do exactly what Buckhurst had been doing. He was most strictly and earnestly commanded to deal privately with all such persons as had influence with the “common sort of people,” in order that

¹ Leicester to Junius, *ubi sup.*

they should use their influence with those common people in favour of peace, bringing vividly before them the excessive burthens of the war, their inability to cope with so potent a prince as Philip, and the necessity the Queen was under of discontinuing her contributions to their support. He was to make the same representations to the States, and he was further most explicitly to inform all concerned, that, in case they were unmoved by these suggestions, her Majesty had quite made up her mind to accept the handsome offers of peace held out by the King of Spain, and to leave them to their fate.

It seemed scarcely possible that the letter to Junius and the instructions for the Earl should have been dated the same week, and should have emanated from the same mind ; but such was the fact.

He was likewise privately to assure Maurice and Hohenlo— in order to remove their anticipated opposition to the peace—that such care should be taken in providing for them, as that “they should have no just cause to dislike thereof, but to rest satisfied withal.”

With regard to the nature of his authority, he was instructed to claim a kind of dictatorship in everything regarding the command of the forces, and the distribution of the public treasure. All offices were to be at his disposal. Every florin contributed by the States was to be placed in his hands, and spent according to his single will. He was also to have plenary power to prevent the trade in victuals with the enemy by death and confiscation.

If opposition to any of these proposals were made by the States-General, he was to appeal to the States of each Province, to the towns and communities, and in case it should prove impossible for him “to be furnished with the desired authority,” he was then instructed to say that it was “her Majesty’s meaning to leave them to their own counsel and defence, and to withdraw the support that she had yielded to them : seeing plainly that the continuance of the confused

government now reigning among them could not but work their ruin."¹

Both these papers came into Barneveld's hands, through the agency of Ortel, the States' envoy in England, before the arrival of the Earl in the Netherlands.²

Of course they soon became the topics of excited conversation and of alarm in every part of the country. Buckhurst, touched to the quick by the reflection upon those proceedings of his which had been so explicitly enjoined upon him, and so reluctantly undertaken—appealed earnestly to her Majesty. He reminded her, as delicately as possible, that her honour, as well as his own, was at stake by Leicester's insolent disavowals of her authorized ambassador. He besought her to remember "what even her own royal hand had written to the Duke of Parma;" and how much his honour was interested "by the disavowing of his dealings about the peace begun by her Majesty's commandment." He adjured her with much eloquence to think upon the consequences of stirring up the common and unstable multitude against their rulers; upon the pernicious effects of allowing the clergy to inflame the passions of the people against the government. "Under the name of such as have charge over the people," said Buckhurst, "are understood the ministers and chaplains of the churches in every town, by the means of whom it seems that his Lordship tendeth his whole purpose to attain to his desire of the administration of the sovereignty." He assured the Queen that this scheme of Leicester to seize virtually upon that sovereignty, would be a disastrous one. "The States are resolved," said he, "since your Majesty doth refuse the sovereignty, to lay it upon no creature else, as a thing contrary to their oath and allegiance to their country." He reminded her also that the States had been dissatisfied with the Earl's former administration, believing that he had ex-

¹ Instructions for the Earl of Leicester, 20 June, 1587. Corrected by Lord Burghley and Secretary Walsingham. (S. P. Office MS. Compare Bor, II. xxi. 906, 907.)

² Bor, II. xxii. 906, 907. "By the way," writes Leicester to Burghley, "send away Ortel; he is a bad fellow." Leicester to Burghley, 17 Aug. 1587 (S. P. Office MS.)

ceeded his commission, and that they were determined therefore to limit his authority at his return. "Your sacred Majesty may consider," he said, "what effect all this may work among the common and ignorant people, by intimating that, unless they shall procure him the administration of such a sovereignty as he requireth, their ruin may ensue."¹ Buckhurst also informed her that he had despatched Councillor Wilkes to England, in order that he might give more ample information on all these affairs by word of mouth than could well be written.

It need hardly be stated that Barneveld came down to the states'-house with these papers in his hand, and thundered against the delinquent and intriguing governor till the general indignation rose to an alarming height. False statements of course were made to Leicester as to the substance of the Advocate's discourse. He was said to have charged upon the English government an intention to seize forcibly upon their cities, and to transfer them to Spain on payment of the sums due to the Queen from the States, and to have declared that he had found all this treason in the secret instructions of the Earl.² But Barneveld had read the instructions, to which the attention of the reader has just been called, and had strictly stated the truth, which was damaging enough, without need of exaggeration.

¹ Buckhurst to the Queen, 28 June, 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba. C. xi. p. 61, MS.)

² Memorial in Burghley's hand, Sept. 1587. Killigrew and Beale to the Lords, 11 Sept. 1587. Leicester to Burghley, 17 Aug. 1587. Same to same, 11 Sept. 1587. (S. P. Office MSS.)

"These persuasions of this fellow Barneveld," says the Earl in the last-cited letter, "wrought great impressions in many men that her Majesty had a former resolution in herself to make peace without these countries, and that my now sending was only to get authority here with the commandment of places and people, that, if these men would not agree to such peace as her Majesty would appoint, they should be compelled thereto by such forces as I should have at my disposition;

alleging also that these few supplies which I brought was to augment my power the stronger for this only end. These informations, assisted with the report of the copy of my instructions and letters, for the verifying of which the party took new oath that they were the true copies which he had, and moved him to speak so plainly, which matters were very probable and greatly persuadable to the common sort; yet is the matter so used as notwithstanding all his allegations both of instructions and letters, all men are satisfied; and I have not denied but such words are in my instructions and such a letter written, and yet we made all to agree with an honourable and gracious intention in her Majesty towards them all," &c. (Compare Meteren, xiv. 255 seq. Bor, II. xxii. 906, 907. Hoofd, Verv. 239. Wagenaar viii. 223, 224.)

CHAPTER XVI.

Situation of Sluys—Its Dutch and English Garrison—Williams writes from Sluys to the Queen—Jealousy between the Earl and States—Schemes to relieve Sluys—Which are feeble and unsuccessful—The Town Capitulates—Parma enters—Leicester enraged—The Queen angry with the Anti-Leicestrians—Norris, Wilkes, and Buckhurst punished—Drake sails for Spain—His Exploits at Cadiz and Lisbon—He is rebuked by Elizabeth.

WHEN Dante had passed through the third circle of the Inferno—a desert of red-hot sand, in which lay a multitude of victims of divine wrath, additionally tortured by an ever-descending storm of fiery flakes—he was led by Virgil out of this burning wilderness along a narrow causeway. This path was protected, he said, against the showers of flame, by the lines of vapour which rose eternally from a boiling brook. Even by such shadowy bulwarks, added the poet, do the Flemings between Cadzand and Bruges protect their land against the ever-threatening sea.¹

It was precisely among these slender dykes between Kadzand and Bruges that Alexander Farnese had now planted all the troops that he could muster in the field. It was his determination to conquer the city of Sluys; for the possession of that important sea-port was necessary for him as a basis for the invasion of England, which now occupied all the thoughts of his sovereign and himself.

Exactly opposite the city was the island of Kadzand, once a fair and fertile territory, with a city and many flourishing villages upon its surface, but at that epoch diminished

¹ "Hora cen porta l' un de' duri margini
E il fumo del ruscel' di sopra aduggia
St che dal fuoco salva l' acqua e gl' argini
Qual i Flamminghi fra *Guasante* e Bruggia
Temendo il frotto che ver lor s' avventa
Fanno li schermi acciochè 'l mar si fuggia."
Inferno, Canto xv.

Compare Guicciardini, '*Descritt. des Pays Bas*,' ed. 1582, p. 371
Strada, II. 487. Bentivoglio, P. II
L. V. 313.

to a small dreary sand-bank by the encroachments of the ocean.

A stream of inland water, rising a few leagues to the south of Sluys, divided itself into many branches just before reaching the city, converted the surrounding territory into a miniature archipelago—the islands of which were shifting treacherous sand-banks at low water, and submerged ones at flood—and then widening and deepening into a considerable estuary, opened for the city a capacious harbour, and an excellent although intricate passage to the sea. The city, which was well built and thriving, was so hidden in its labyrinth of canals and streamlets, that it seemed almost as difficult a matter to find Sluys as to conquer it. It afforded safe harbour for five hundred large vessels ; and its possession, therefore, was extremely important for Parma. Besides these natural defences, the place was also protected by fortifications, which were as well constructed as the best of that period. There was a strong rampire and many towers. There was also a detached citadel of great strength, looking towards the sea, and there was a ravelin, called St. Anne's, looking in the direction of Bruges. A mere riband of dry land in that quarter was all of solid earth to be found in the environs of Sluys.

The city itself stood upon firm soil, but that soil had been hollowed into a vast system of subterranean magazines, not for warlike purposes, but for cellars, as Sluys had been from a remote period the great entrepot of foreign wines in the Netherlands.¹

While the eternal disputes between Leicester and the States were going on both in Holland and in England, while the secret negotiations between Alexander Farnese and Queen Elizabeth were slowly proceeding at Brussels and Greenwich, the Duke, notwithstanding the destitute condition of his troops, and the famine which prevailed throughout the obedient Provinces, had succeeded in bringing a little army of five thousand foot, and something less than one thousand

¹ Authorities last cited. Meteren, xiv. 254^{vo} 255. Hoofd, Verv. 254.

horse, into the field.¹ A portion of this force he placed under the command of the veteran La Motte. That distinguished campaigner had assured the commander-in-chief that the reduction of the city would be an easy achievement.² Alexander soon declared that the enterprise was the most difficult one that he had ever undertaken.³ Yet, two years before, he had carried to its triumphant conclusion the famous siege of Antwerp. He stationed his own division upon the isle of Kadzand, and strengthened his camp by additionally fortifying those shadowy bulwarks, by which the island, since the age of Dante, had entrenched itself against the assaults of ocean.

On the other hand, La Motte, by the orders of his chief, had succeeded, after a sharp struggle, in carrying the fort of St. Anne. A still more important step was the surprising of Blankenburg, a small fortified place on the coast, about midway between Ostend and Sluys, by which the sea-communications with the former city for the relief of the beleaguered town were interrupted.⁴

Parma's demonstrations against Sluys had commenced in the early days of June. The commandant of the place was Arnold de Groenevelt, a Dutch noble of ancient lineage and approved valour. His force was, however, very meagre, hardly numbering more than eight hundred, all Netherlanders, but counting among its officers several most distinguished personages—Nicholas de Maulde, Adolphus de Meet-

¹ Parma to Philip II., 6 Aug. 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

This force was subsequently very much increased. It is impossible, however, to arrive at the exact numbers. They are not stated by Farnese in his letters to the King, preserved in the Archives of Simancas. Strada (II. 489) gives the numbers as stated in the text. Roger Williams, however, in a letter to Queen Elizabeth, sent from Sluys at an early period of the siege, says that the Duke of Parma had come before the town, a week before, in person, with four regiments of Walloons, four of Germans, fifty-two companies of Spaniards, twenty-four cornets of horse, and forty-eight pieces of battery,

and that the next day there arrived one regiment of Italians and one of Burgundians. This would give a total of at least 17,600 men, more than thrice as many as the historiographer of the Duke allows. R. Williams to the Queen, ⁹/₁₉ June, 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, D. I. p. 40, MS.)

² Parma to Philip II., 6 Aug. 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

³ Ibid. "En mio poco juicio la mas dificultosa y laboriosa cosa que he visto e acometido en Flandea."

⁴ Strada, II. 488. Meteren, *ubi sup.* Bor, II. xxii. 984. Bantivoglio, *ubi sup.*

kerke and his younger brother, Captain Heraugiere, and other well-known partisans.

On the threatening of danger the commandant had made application to Sir William Russell, the worthy successor of Sir Philip Sidney in the government of Flushing. He had received from him, in consequence, a reinforcement of eight hundred English soldiers, under several eminent chieftains, foremost among whom were the famous Welshman Roger Williams, Captain Huntley, Baskerville, Sir Francis Vere, Ferdinando Gorges, and Captain Hart. This combined force, however, was but a slender one, there being but sixteen hundred men to protect two miles and a half of rampart, besides the forts and ravelins.¹

But, such as it was, no time was lost in vain regrets. The sorties against the besiegers were incessant and brilliant. On one occasion Sir Francis Vere—conspicuous in the throng, in his red mantilla, and supported only by one hundred Englishmen and Dutchmen, under Captain Baskerville—held at bay eight companies of the famous Spanish legion called the Terzo Veijo, at push of pike, took many prisoners, and forced the Spaniards from the position in which they were entrenching themselves.² On the other hand, Farnese declared that he had never in his life witnessed anything so unflinching as the courage of his troops; employed as they were in digging trenches where the soil was neither land nor water, exposed to inundation by the suddenly-opened sluices, to a plunging fire from the forts, and to perpetual hand-to-hand combats with an active and fearless foe, and yet pumping away in the coffer-dams—which they had invented by way of obtaining a standing-ground for their operations—as steadily and sedately as if engaged in purely pacific employments.³ The besieged were inspired by a courage equally remarkable. The regular garrison was small enough, but the burghers were courageous,

¹ Strada, Meteren, Bor, Bentivoglio, Hoofl, *ubi sup.* Roger Williams, 'Discourse of War,' apud Grimstone, 'Hist. Netherlands, L. xiii. 962.

² R. Williams, *ubi sup.*

³ Parma to Philip II. ^{20 July} 1587. ^{6 Aug.} (Arch. de Simancas, MS.) Strada, II. 491.

and even the women organized themselves into a band of pioneers. This corps of Amazons, led by two female captains, rejoicing in the names of 'May in the Heart' and 'Catherine the Rose,' actually constructed an important redoubt between the citadel and the rampart, which received, in compliment to its builders, the appellation of 'Fort Venus.'¹

The demands of the beleaguered garrison, however, upon the States and upon Leicester were most pressing. Captain Hart swam thrice out of the city with letters to the States, to the governor-general, and to Queen Elizabeth; and the same perilous feat was performed several times by a Netherland officer.² The besieged meant to sell their lives dearly, but it was obviously impossible for them, with so slender a force, to resist a very long time.

"Our ground is great and our men not so many," wrote Roger Williams to his sovereign, "but we trust in God and our valour to defend it. We mean, with God's help, to make their downs red and black, and to let out every acre of our ground for a thousand of their lives, besides our own."³

The Welshman was no braggart, and had proved often enough that he was more given to performances than promises. "We doubt not your Majesty will succour us," he said, "for our honest mind and plain dealing toward your royal person and dear country;" adding, as a bit of timely advice, "Royal Majesty, believe not over much your peacemakers. Had they their mind, they will not only undo your friends abroad, but, in the end, your royal estate."⁴

Certainly it was from no want of wholesome warning from wise statesmen and blunt soldiers that the Queen was venturing into that labyrinth of negotiation which might prove so treacherous. Never had been so inopportune a moment for that princess to listen to the voice of him who was charming her so wisely, while he was at the same moment battering

¹ Bor, III. xxiii. 6, *seq.*

² Meteren, Bor, R. Williams, *ubi sup.*

³ R. Williams to the Queen, ⁹/₁₉ June, 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, D. I. p. 40, MS.)

⁴ *Ibid.*

the place, which was to be the basis of his operations against her realm. Her delay in sending forth Leicester, with at least a moderate contingent, to the rescue, was most pernicious. The States—ignorant of the Queen's exact relations with Spain, and exaggerating her disingenuousness into absolute perfidy—became on their own part exceedingly to blame. There is no doubt whatever that both Hollanders and Englishmen were playing into the hands of Parma as adroitly as if he had actually directed their movements. Deep were the denunciations of Leicester and his partisans by the States' party, and incessant the complaints of the English and Dutch troops shut up in Sluys against the inactivity or treachery of Maurice and Hohenlo.

"If Count Maurice and his base brother, the Admiral (Justinus de Nassau), be too young to govern, must Holland and Zeeland lose their countries and towns to make them expert men of war?" asked Roger Williams.¹ A pregnant question certainly, but the answer was, that by suspicion and jealousy, rather than by youth and inexperience, the arms were paralyzed which should have saved the garrison. "If these base fellows (the States) will make Count Hollock their instrument," continued the Welshman, "to cover and maintain their folly and lewd dealing, is it necessary for her royal Majesty to suffer it? These are too great matters to be rehearsed by me; but because I am in the town, and do resolve to sign with my blood my duty in serving my sovereign and country, I trust her Majesty will pardon me."² Certainly the gallant adventurer on whom devolved at least half the work of directing the defence of the city, had a right to express his opinions. Had he known the whole truth, however, those opinions would have been modified. And he wrote amid the smoke and turmoil of daily and nightly battle.

"Yesterday was the fifth sally we made," he observed. "Since I followed the wars I never saw valianter captains,

¹ Williams to Walsingham, ^{22 June,} 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, C. xi. 102, MS.)
² July

² Ibid.

nor willinger soldiers. At eleven o'clock the enemy entered the ditch of our fort, with trenches upon wheels, artillery-proof. We sallied out, recovered their trenches, slew the governor of Dam, two Spanish captains, with a number of others, repulsed them into their artillery, kept the ditch until yesternight, and will recover it, with God's help, this night, or else pay dearly for it. . . . I care not what may become of me in this world, so that her Majesty's honour, with the rest of honourable good friends, *will think me an honest man.*"¹

No one ever doubted the simple-hearted Welshman's honesty, any more than his valour; but he confided in the candour of others who were somewhat more sophisticated than himself. When he warned her royal Majesty against the peace-makers, it was impossible for him to know that the great peace-maker was Elizabeth herself.

After the expiration of a month the work had become most fatiguing. The enemy's trenches had been advanced close to the ramparts, and desperate conflicts were of daily occurrence. The Spanish mines, too, had been pushed forward towards the extensive wine-caverns below the city, and the danger of a vast explosion or of a general assault from beneath their very feet, seemed to the inhabitants imminent. Eight days long, with scarcely an intermission, amid those sepulchral vaults, dimly-lighted with torches, Dutchmen, Englishmen, Spaniards, Italians, fought hand to hand, with pike, pistol, and dagger, within the bowels of the earth.²

Meantime the operations of the States were not commendable. The ineradicable jealousy between the Leicestrians and the Barneveldians had done its work. There was no hearty effort for the relief of Sluys. There were suspicions that, if saved, the town would only be taken possession of by the Earl of Leicester, as an additional vantage-point for coercing the country into subjection to his arbitrary authority. Perhaps

¹ Williams to Walsingham, last cited.

² Strada, II. 486-512. Meteren, *ubi sup.* Bor, III. xxiii. 5-9, 14-21. Herzæus, III. 402-404.

it would be transferred to Philip by Elizabeth as part of the price for peace. There was a growing feeling in Holland and Zeeland, that, as those Provinces bore all the expense of the war, it was an imperative necessity that they should limit their operations to the defence of their own soil. The suspicions as to the policy of the English government were sapping the very foundations of the alliance, and there was small disposition on the part of the Hollanders, therefore, to protect what remained of Flanders, and thus to strengthen the hands of her whom they were beginning to look upon as an enemy.¹

Maurice and Hohenlo made, however, a foray into Brabant, by way of diversion to the siege of Sluys, and thus compelled Farnese to detach a considerable force under Haultepenne into that country, and thereby to weaken himself. The expedition of Maurice was not unsuccessful. There was some sharp skirmishing between Hohenlo and Haultepenne, in which the latter, one of the most valuable and distinguished generals on the royal side, was defeated and slain; the fort of Engel, near Bois-le-Duc, was taken, and that important city itself endangered; but, on the other hand, the contingent on which Leicester relied from the States to assist in relieving Sluys was not forthcoming.²

For, meantime, the governor-general had at last been sent back by his sovereign to the post which he had so long abandoned. Leaving Leicester House on the 4th July ^{24 June,} ^{4 July,} (N.S.), he had come on board the fleet two days ^{1587.} afterwards at Margate. He was bringing with him to the Netherlands three thousand fresh infantry, and thirty thousand pounds, of which sum fifteen thousand pounds had been at last wrung from Elizabeth as an extra loan, in place of the sixty thousand pounds which the States had requested. As he sailed past Ostend and towards Flushing, the Earl was witness to the constant cannonading between the besieged

¹ A brief Report of the Proceedings of his Excellency for the Relief of Sluys, 26 July, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Bor, Meteren, Hoofl, Bentivoglio, Strada, *ubi sup.*

city and the camp of Farnese, and saw that the work could hardly be more serious ; for in one short day more shots were fired than had ever been known before in a single day in all Parma's experience.¹

Arriving at Flushing, the governor-general was well received by the inhabitants ; but the mischief, which had been set a-foot six months before, had done its work. The political intrigues, disputes, and the conflicting party-organizations, have already been set in great detail before the reader, in order that their effect might now be thoroughly understood without explanation. The governor-general came to Flushing at a most critical moment. The fate of all the Spanish Netherlands, of Sluys, and with it the whole of Philip and Parma's great project, were, in Farnese's own language, hanging by a thread.²

It would have been possible—had the transactions of the past six months, so far as regarded Holland and England, been the reverse of what they had been—to save the city, and, by a cordial and united effort, for the two countries to deal the Spanish power such a blow, that summer, as would have paralyzed it for a long time to come, and have placed both commonwealths in comparative security.

Instead of all this, general distrust and mutual jealousy prevailed. Leicester had, previously to his departure from England, summoned the States to meet him at Dort upon his arrival. Not a soul appeared. Such of the state-councillors as were his creatures came to him, and Count Maurice made a visit of ceremony. Discussions about a plan for relieving the siege became mere scenes of bickering and confusion. The officers within Sluys were desirous that a fleet should force its way into the harbour, while, at the same time, the English army, strengthened by the contingent which Leicester had demanded from the States, should advance against the Duke of Parma by land. It was, in truth, the only way

¹ Authorities last cited. Lloyd to Walsingham, 25 June, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.) Baudart, *Polemog.* II. 96, "17,800 shots."

² Parma to Philip, II. 6 Aug. 1587. (Arch. de Simancas MS.) "Colgados da un hilo todos los estados y todo lo dependiente," &c.

to succour the place. The scheme was quite practicable. Leicester recommended it, the Hollanders seemed to favour it, Commandant Groenevelt and Roger Williams urged it.

"I do assure you," wrote the honest Welshman to Leicester "if you will come afore this town, with as many galliots and as many flat-bottomed boats as can cause two men-of-war to enter, they cannot stop their passage, if your mariners will do a quarter of their duty, as I saw them do divers times. Before they make their entrance, we will come with our boats, and fight with the greatest part, and show them there is no such great danger. Were it not for my wounded arm, I would be in your first boat to enter. Notwithstanding, I and other Englishmen will approach their boats in such sort, that we will force them to give their saker of artillery upon us. If your Excellency will give ear unto those false lewd fellows (the Captain meant the States-General), you shall lose great opportunity. Within ten or twelve days the enemy will make his bridge from Kadzand unto St. Anne, and force you to hazard battle before you succour this town. Let my Lord Willoughby and Sir William Russell land at Terhoven, right against Kadzand, with 4000, and entrench hard by the water-side, where their boats can carry them victual and munition. They may approach by trenches without engaging any dangerous fight. . . . We dare not show the estate of this town more than we have done by Captain Herte. We must fight this night within our rampart in the fort. You may assure the world here are no Hamerts, but valiant captains and valiant soldiers, such as, with God's help, had rather be buried in the place than be disgraced in any point that belongs to such a number of men-of-war."¹

But in vain did the governor of the place, stout Arnold Groenevelt, assisted by the rough and direct eloquence of Roger Williams, urge upon the Earl of Leicester and the States-General the necessity and the practicability of the plan

¹ Williams to Leicester, ^{29 June}_{9 July}, 1587.
(Brit. Mus. Galba, D. I. p. 152, MS.)
It will be remembered that Baron

Hemart was the unfortunate officer who so disgracefully surrendered Grave in the first year of Leicester's administration.

proposed. The fleet never entered the harbour. There was no William of Orange to save Antwerp and Sluys, as Leyden had once been saved, and his son was not old enough to unravel the web of intrigue by which he was surrounded, or to direct the whole energies of the commonwealth towards an all-important end. Leicester had lost all influence, all authority, nor were his military abilities equal to the occasion, even if he had been cordially obeyed.

Ten days longer the perpetual battles on the ramparts and within the mines continued, the plans conveyed by the bold swimmer, Captain Hart, for saving the place were still unattempted, and the city was tottering to its fall. "Had Captain Hart's words taken place," wrote Williams, bitterly, "we had been succoured, or, if my letters had prevailed, our pain had been no peril. All wars are best executed in sight of the enemy. . . . The last night of June (10th July, N.S.) the enemy entered the ditches of our fort in three several places, continuing in fight in mine and on rampart for the space of eight nights. The ninth he battered us furiously, made a breach of five score paces saltable for horse and man. That day he attempted us in all places with a general assault for the space of almost five hours."¹

The citadel was now lost. It had been gallantly defended, and it was thenceforth necessary to hold the town itself, in ⁶/₁₆ July, the very teeth of an overwhelming force. "We ¹⁵⁸⁶ were forced to quit the fort," said Sir Roger, "leaving nothing behind us but bare earth. But here we do remain resolutely to be buried, rather than to be dishonoured in the least point."²

It was still possible for the fleet to succour the city. "I do assure you," said Williams, "that your captains and mariners do not their duty unless they enter with no great loss; but you must consider that *no wars may be made without danger*. What you mean to do, we beseech you to do with expedition,

¹ Williams to Leicester, ⁹/₁₉ July, 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, D. I. 179, MS.) Compare Bor, Meteren, Hoofd, Benti-

voglio, Strada, Haraeus, ubi sup. et mult. al.

² Williams to Leicester. (MS. last cited.)

and persuade yourself that we will die valiant, honest men. Your Excellency will do well to thank the old President de Meetkerk for the honesty and valour of his son."¹

Count Maurice and his natural brother, the Admiral, now undertook the succour by sea; but, according to the Leicestrians, they continued dilatory and incompetent. At any rate, it is certain that they did nothing. At last, Parma had completed the bridge, whose construction was so much dreaded. The haven was now enclosed by a strong wooden structure, resting on boats, on a plan similar to that of the famous bridge with which he had two years before bridled the Scheldt, and Sluys was thus completely shut in from the sea. Fire-ships were now constructed, by order of Leicester—feeble imitations of the floating volcanoes of Gianibelli—and it was agreed that they should be sent against the bridge with the first flood-tide. The propitious moment never seemed to arrive, however, and, meantime, the citizens of Flushing, of their own accord, declared that they would themselves equip and conduct a fleet into the harbour of Sluys.² But the Nassaus are said to have expressed great disgust that low-born burghers should presume to meddle with so important an enterprise, which of right belonged to their family.³ Thus, in the midst of these alterations and contradictory schemes, the month of July wore away, and the city was reduced to its last gasp.

¹ R. Williams to Walsingham $\frac{6}{16}$ July, 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, D. I. p. 179. MS.)

Compare 'Discourse of War' apud Grimstone, xiii. 963. "Truly all the Dutch and Walloons," says Sir Roger, "showed themselves constant, resolute, and valiant, especially those brave and valiant captains Meetkerke and Heraugiere." He also especially commends the valour of Huntley, Udall, Scott, Ferdinando Gorges, St. Leger, and Nicholas Baskerville.

² A brief Report of the Proceedings of his Excellency for the relief of Sluys, 26 July, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.) Willoughby, Russell, Pelham and others, to the Lords, 12 Aug. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ "Burghers of Flushing proffered their services, which were accepted with thanks; but that upon Count Maurice and Admiral Nassau being applied to for necessities, they seemed to be touched very much in reputation that a piece of service so respectable should have been left to persons of base quality instead of to themselves, who readily would adventure their best means. His Excellency, fearing to offend them, gave his consent. . . . Maurice declared the enterprise to be impossible without better means, from which it appeared plainly that all had been devised on purpose of delay, until it should be too late to help the town." Willoughby, Russell, *et al.* to the Lords. (MS. last cited.)

For the cannonading had thoroughly done its work. Eighteen days long the burghers and what remained of the garrison had lived upon the ramparts, never leaving their posts, but eating, sleeping, and fighting day and night. Of the sixteen hundred Dutch and English but seven hundred remained. At last a swimming messenger was sent out by the besieged with despatches for the States, to the purport that the city could hold out no longer. A breach in the wall had been effected wide enough to admit a hundred men abreast. Sluys had, in truth, already fallen, and it was hopeless any longer to conceal the fact. If not relieved within a day or two, the garrison would be obliged to surrender; but they distinctly stated, that they had all pledged themselves, soldiers and burghers, men, women, and all, unless the most honourable terms were granted, to set fire to the city in a hundred places, and then sally, in mass, from the gates, determined to fight their way through, or be slain in the attempt. The messenger who carried these despatches was drowned, but the letters were saved, and fell into Parma's hands.¹

At the same moment, Leicester was making, at last, an effort to raise the siege. He brought three or four thousand men from Flushing, and landed them at Ostend; thence he marched to Blanckenburg. He supposed that if he could secure that little port, and thus cut the Duke completely off from the sea, he should force the Spanish commander to raise (or at least suspend) the siege in order to give him battle. Meantime, an opportunity would be afforded for Maurice and Hohenlo to force an entrance into the harbour of Sluys. In this conjecture he was quite correct; but unfortunately he did not thoroughly carry out his own scheme. If the Earl had established himself at Blanckenburg, it would have been necessary for Parma—as he himself subsequently declared—to raise the siege.² Leicester carried the outposts of the place successfully; but, so soon as Farnese was aware of this demonstration, he detached a few companies with orders to

¹ Strada, Bor, Meteren, Hoofd, R. Williams, in Grimstone, *ubi sup. et al.*

² Strada, II. 508, 509, *seq.*

skirmish with the enemy until the commander-in-chief, with as large a force as he could spare, should come in person to his support. To the unexpected gratification of Farnese, however, no sooner did the advancing Spaniards come in sight, than the Earl, supposing himself invaded by the whole of the Duke's army, under their famous general, and not feeling himself strong enough for such an encounter, retired, with great precipitation, to his boats, re-embarked his troops with the utmost celerity, and set sail for Ostend.¹

The next night had been fixed for sending forth the fire-ships against the bridge, and for the entrance of the fleet into the harbour. One fire-ship floated a little way towards the bridge and exploded ingloriously. Leicester rowed in his barge about the fleet, superintending the soundings and markings of the channel, and hastening the preparations ; but, as the decisive moment approached, the pilots who had promised to conduct the expedition came aboard his pinnace and positively refused to have aught to do with the enterprise, which they now declared an impossibility.² The Earl was furious with the pilots, with Maurice, with Hohenlo, with Admiral de Nassau, with the States, with all the world. He stormed and raged and beat his breast, but all in vain. His ferocity would have been more useful the day before, in face of the Spaniards, than now, against the Zeeland mariners. But the invasion by the fleet alone, unsupported by a successful land-operation, was pronounced impracticable, and very soon the relieving fleet was seen by the distressed garrison sailing away from the neighbourhood, and it soon disappeared beneath the horizon. Their fate was sealed. They entered into treaty with Parma, who, secretly instructed, as has been seen, of their desperate intentions, in case any but the most honourable conditions were offered, granted those conditions. The garrison were allowed to go out with colours displayed, lighted matches, bullet in mouth, and with bag and baggage. Such of the burghers as chose to conform to the government of

¹ Strada, Bor, Meteren, Hoofd, Haraeus, Bentivoglio, *ubi sup.*

² Lloyd to Walsingham, $\frac{27 \text{ July}}{6 \text{ Aug.}}$, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

Spain and the church of Rome, were permitted to remain. Those who preferred to depart were allowed reasonable time to make their necessary arrangements.¹

"We have hurt and slain very near eight hundred," said Sir Roger Williams. "We had not powder to fight two hours. There was a breach of almost four hundred paces, another of three score, another of fifty, saltable for horse and men. We had lain continually eighteen nights all on the breaches. He gave us honourable composition. Had the state of England lain on it, our lives could not defend the place three hours, for half the rampires were his, neither had we any pioneers but ourselves. We were sold by their negligence who are now angry with us."²

On the 5th August Parma entered the city. Roger Williams—with his gilt morion rather battered, and his great plume of feathers much bedraggled—was a witness to the victor's entrance. Alexander saluted respectfully an officer so well known to him by reputation, and with some complimentary remarks urged him to enter the Spanish service, and to take the field against the Turks.³

"My sword," replied the doughty Welshman, "belongs to her royal Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, above and before all the world. When her Highness has no farther use for it, it is at the service of the King of Navarre."⁴

Considering himself sufficiently answered, the Duke then requested Sir Roger to point out Captain Baskerville—very conspicuous by a greater plume of feathers than even that of the Welshman himself—and embraced that officer, when presented to him, before all his staff. "There serves no prince

¹ Brief Report, &c. MS. already cited. Lloyd to Walsingham. MS. already cited. Leicester to same, 12 Aug. 1587. Willoughby and others to the Lords, 12 Aug. 1587. Leicester to same, 12 Aug. 1587. Same to Burghley, 27 July, 1587. Same to same, 13 July, 1587. Same to the Lords, 27 July, 1587. Same to same, 17 Aug. 1587. F. Needham to Walsingham, 12 Aug. 1587. (S. P. Office

MSS.) Compare Bor, Meteren, Hoof, Haraeus, Bentivoglio, Strada, R. Williams, *ubi sup.* Wagenaar, viii. 225–227. Baudart, Polemog., II. 96, *et mult. al.*

² Williams to Leicester, 5 Aug. 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, D. I. p. 214, MS.)

³ Needham to Walsingham, 12 Aug. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Ibid.

in Europe a braver man than this Englishman," cried Alexander, who well knew how to appreciate high military qualities, whether in his own army or in that of his foes.¹

The garrison then retired, Sluys became Spanish, and a capacious harbour, just opposite the English coast, was in Parma's hands. Sir Roger Williams was despatched by Leicester to bear the melancholy tidings to his government, and the Queen was requested to cherish the honest Welshman, and at least to set him on horseback, for he was of himself not rich enough to buy even a saddle. It is painful to say that the captain did not succeed in getting the horse.²

The Earl was furious in his invectives against Hohenlo, against Maurice, against the States, uniformly ascribing the loss of Sluys to negligence and faction. As for Sir John Norris, he protested that his misdeeds in regard to this business would, in King Henry VIII.'s time, have "cost him his pate."³

¹ R. Williams, in Grimstone, lxiii. 962.

² "I pray you be good to this bearer, Sir Roger Williams, for he is to be cherished. Her Majesty I trust will help him; and if these wars continue, return him with speed, but set him well on horseback, for he is not worth the saddle of a horse." Leicester to Walsingham, 12 Aug. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.) Yet according to the report of Captain Needham, even Williams had at last become an object of the Earl's jealousy and suspicion, on account of the flattering offers made to him by Farnese. "The Duke of Parma had essayed," says Needham, "by all possible means to gain Sir Roger Williams, but could not prevail, although he thought the hard usage he had received from the Earl of Leicester would be an occasion to make him leave his party. Themistocles (Leicester) had hereupon conceived great jealousy, and hath not spared to give warning to Sir W. Russell to beware of Williams as of one who would be his undoing, and as it seems reported as much to the Lord North and Sir W. Pelham. . . . The gentleman (Williams) was wonderfully perplexed that for his faithful service he should reap his utter undoing, and to be accounted a traitor to

his prince. He wished he were at home, upon condition he should never bear arms here, for he knew the nature of Themistocles, as he would leave no means unsought to overthrow his credit," &c. The conversation of the Duke with the Welshman has been reported in the text.

"The Earl of Essex promises me," wrote Williams subsequently, "that her Majesty will do something for me. For my part I do hardly believe it, for I can get no countenance from her Highness. I humbly desire your Excellency to write this for me, either to give me something or discharge me away with nothing. . . . I fear things will not fall out here as well as you would wish. Were your Excellency here, her Majesty would do more. The more the merrier. Without your presence your friends dare not speak what they would, for the simplest that speaks of the peace is better here than the wisest that contraries it. I fear me it is passed so far that the King of Navarre is like to smart for it," &c. R. Williams to Leicester, 1 Sept. 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, D. II. p. 5, MS.)

³ Leicester to Walsingham, 12 Aug. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

"As for this matter of Sluys," said

The loss of Sluys was the beginning and foreshadowed the inevitable end of Leicester's second administration. The inaction of the States was one of the causes of its loss. Distrust of Leicester was the cause of the inaction. Sir William Russell, Lord Willoughby, Sir William Pelham, and other English officers, united in statements exonerating the Earl from all blame for the great failure to relieve the place. At the same time, it could hardly be maintained that his expedition to Blanckenburg and his precipitate retreat on the first appearance of the enemy were proofs of consummate generalship. He took no blame to himself for the disaster; but he and his partisans were very liberal in their denunciations of the Hollanders,¹ and Leicester was even ungrateful enough to censure Roger Williams, whose life had been passed, as it were, at push of pike with the Spaniards, and who was one of his own most devoted adherents.

The Queen was much exasperated when informed of the fall of the city. She severely denounced the Netherlands, and

the Earl, "I may stand before the tribunal seat of God for any fault in me. The greatest is that I did trust Count Maurice too much, but either I must have trusted him or not have had any means at all for shipping. As it is well known beside, he offered his service most frankly and willingly, and did take upon him and his bastard brother to attempt the bridge by such men as they had chosen, to whom I gave 30*l.* beforehand." And in the same vein he says to Burleigh, "I am grieved to think, much more to speak of the loss of Sluys. God knoweth we have done for our parts as much as if a kingdom had stood upon it. But these men have strange designs in their heads, which will in the end breed their own ruin. . . . The dregs of their dealing will, I fear, remain a good while, for the practice and fashion continue. . . . I must beg you to bear with me, for I scarce know what I write, what with grief for the loss of this town, and with anger for the vile lewd dealing of these men that have so naughtily carried themselves in this matter for Sluys. First, by letting me have no men of theirs, when I had but

a few men furnished; then, their long deferring our men to be furnished; after, their lack of provisions of all sorts; lastly, vessels and barks to land our men. And these with such like hath brought this poor town to be lost." . . . He then makes an insinuation against the brave and true-hearted Welahman, who had been fighting night and day, from the beginning of the siege to the end. "And yet I cannot, for many respects, how well soever I think of Sir William Rogers' valour and the other captains, give them countenance or access to me, before they do give some good reason for the delivery of the town without sending to me first." Leicester to Burghley,

27 July

(S. P. Office MS.)

6 Aug.

¹ "Your honour may see," said Lloyd, "how Count Hobenlo's proceedings, and States' practices, and this late action, do concur as matters that have been hammered on one anvil and issued from one forge." R. Lloyd

to Walsingham, 20 July
6 Aug. 1567. (S. P. Office MS.)

even went so far as to express dissatisfaction with the great Leicester himself.¹ Meantime, Farnese was well satisfied with his triumph, for he had been informed that "all England was about to charge upon him," in order to relieve the place.² All England, however, had been but feebly represented by three thousand raw recruits with a paltry sum of 15,000*l.* to help pay a long bill of arrears.

Wilkes and Norris had taken their departure from the Netherlands before the termination of the siege, and immediately after the return of Leicester. They did not think it expedient to wait upon the governor before leaving the country,³ for they had very good reason to believe that such an opportunity of personal vengeance would be turned to account by the Earl. Wilkes had already avowed his intention of making his escape without being dandled with leave-takings, and no doubt he was right. The Earl was indignant when he found that they had given him the slip, and denounced them with fresh acrimony to the Queen, imploring her to wreak full measure of wrath upon their heads;⁴ and he well knew that his entreaties would meet with the royal attention.

Buckhurst had a parting interview with the governor-general, at which Killigrew and Beale, the new English counsellors who had replaced Wilkes and Clerk, were present. The conversation was marked by insolence on the part of Leicester, and by much bitterness on that of Buckhurst. The parting envoy refused to lay before the Earl a full statement of the grievances between the States-General and the governor, on the ground that Leicester had no right to be judge in his

¹ Essex to Leicester, ^{31 July,} 1587.
^{10 Aug.}
(S. P. Office MS.) Walsingham to same, 2 Aug. 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, D. I. p. 234, MS.) "The ill success of Sluys causeth her to pick some quarrel towards your Lordship in that action, as by her letters you may perceive."

² "Corria la voz que cargava toda Inglaterra." Parma to Philip, 6 Aug. 1587. (Arch. de Simancaa, MS.)

³ Wilkes to the Lords, 20 July, 1587, (S. P. Office MS.) explaining—what had been sufficiently explained before

—why he left the Netherlands without greeting Leicester, "for that he was too terrified to come into his presence, knowing his animosity." He expresses the hope that "her Majesty, being the image of God on earth, will be like to Him in mercy, and not suffer more to be laid upon him than flesh and blood can bear."

⁴ Leicester to Walsingham, 4 July, 1587. Same to Queen, 7 July, 1587. Same to Burghley, 13 July, 1587. (S. P. Office MSS.)

own cause. The matter, he said, should be laid before the Queen in council, and by her august decision he was willing to abide. On every other subject he was ready to give any information in his power. The interview lasted a whole forenoon and afternoon. Buckhurst, according to his own statement, answered freely all questions put to him by Leicester and his counsellors ; while, if the report of those personages is to be trusted, he passionately refused to make any satisfactory communication. Under the circumstances, however, it may well be believed that no satisfactory communication was possible.¹

On arriving in England, Sir John Norris was forbidden to come into her Majesty's presence, Wilkes was thrown into the Fleet Prison, and Buckhurst was confined in his own country house.²

Norris had done absolutely nothing, which, even by implication, could be construed into a dereliction of duty ; but it was sufficient that he was hated by Leicester, who had not scrupled, over and over again, to denounce this first general of England as a fool, a coward, a knave, and a liar.

As for Wilkes, his only crime was a most conscientious discharge of his duty, in the course of which he had found cause to modify his abstract opinions in regard to the origin of sovereignty, and had come reluctantly to the conviction that Leicester's unpopularity had made perhaps another governor-general desirable. But this admission had only been made privately and with extreme caution ; while, on the other hand, he had constantly defended the absent Earl, with all the eloquence at his command. But the hatred of Leicester was sufficient to consign this able and painstaking public servant to a prison ; and thus was a man of worth, honour, and talent, who had been placed in a position of grave responsibility and immense fatigue, and who had done his duty

¹ Killigrew and Beale to Walsingham, 13 July, 1587. Buckhurst to Burghley, 22 July, 1587. A true declaration of the proceedings of Lord Buckhurst and Dr. Clerke, 24 July, 1587. (S. P. Office MSS.)

² Buckhurst to Walsingham, 24th July, 1587. Same to Burghley, 24 July, 1587. Same to same, 28 July, 1587. Walsingham to Leicester, 29 July, 1587. (S. P. Office MSS.)

like an upright, straight-forward Englishman, sacrificed to the wrath of a favourite. "Surely, Mr. Secretary," said the Earl, "there was never a falser creature, a more seditious wretch, than Wilkes. He is a villain, a devil, without faith or religion."¹

As for Buckhurst himself, it is unnecessary to say a word in

¹ Leicester to Walsingham, 4 Aug. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.) Buckhurst was of a different opinion.

"Mr. Wilkes, having had so long experience in these parts," he wrote, "and being so careful and diligent for the good preservation and furtherance of the cause, whereof in the late dangerous times and troubles here he made right good testimony, is able therein to do your Majesty most especial and notable service, being also otherwise so sufficiently practised in the estate of other countries and so well trained in your affairs at home, with such excellent gifts of *utterance, memory, wit, courage, and knowledge, and with so faithful and careful a heart* to serve your Majestey, as *it were a woeful case* if such a worthy servant should for any respect be discomforted and disgraced by your Majesty's displeasure." Buckhurst to the Queen, 28 June, 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, C. xi. p. 61, MS.)

Yet such a eulogy from so illustrious a man, and fully borne out by the deeds and words of Wilkes himself, could not save the councillor from the gaol. He had loved Sir John Norris, which was enough to secure him the hatred of Leicester, and consequently the unmitigated wrath of the Queen.

But these pages have already illustrated the copiousness of the great Earl's vocabulary in vituperation. Mr. P. B., Sir John Norris, Hollock, Wilkes, Buckhurst himself, the States-General, the States-Provincial, and, in brief, any one who crossed his schemes, were sure to draw down the full tempest of wrath. He was now very angry with those who surrounded young Maurice, especially with the minister Villiers, whom he pronounced to be "a condemned man, not only among all honest and godly men, but also with all the churches through all the Provinces." Sainte Aldegonde, too, whom before and after this point of time, he seemed to appreciate and

applaud, was now held up as an object of suspicion. "I have found cause of late," he says, "to fear Sainte Aldegonde to be an unsound and hollow man. There are great presumptions that he is dealing in secret with Parma. He is lately married. All men condemn him for it, and his best friends did greatly dissuade him from it, but it would not be. And now is he to return again for two or three months, being known to be greatly favoured on the other side, and can enjoy no penny but by that favour. I see he takes no course to please the church. The young Count is directed by both him and Villiers, albeit the one, Sainte Aldegonde, doth make less show than the other. Oh, God, what a world it is! Both these hot men heretofore are become less than lukewarm now, and wholly given to policy." Leicester to Walsingham, MS above cited.

Yet before the end of the year Sainte Aldegonde was violently abused by others for opposite tendencies. "The Count of Hollock being drunk the other day," says Sir Robert Sidney, "took a quarrel to Monsieur de Sainte Aldegonde, saying he was wont to be a lover of the house of Nassau, but now he was grown altogether a Leicesterian, the which he repeated sundry times upon him before the Count Maurice and many other gentlemen. In truth, I think Sainte Aldegonde very well affected unto your Excellency. Surely he mislikes the proceeding here, and meddles nothing with them." Sidney to Leicester, 31 Dec. 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, D. II. p. 288.)

Nothing could be more unscrupulous than the denunciations of Leicester whenever he was offended. They would seem almost risible, were it not that the capricious wrath of the all-powerful favourite was often sufficient to blast the character, the career, the hopes, and even take away the lives, of honest men.

his defence. The story of his mission has been completely detailed from the most authentic and secret documents, and there is not a single line written to the Queen, to her ministers, to the States, to any public body or to any private friend, in England or elsewhere, that does not reflect honour on his name. With sagacity, without passion, with unaffected sincerity, he had unravelled the complicated web of Netherland politics, and, with clear vision, had penetrated the designs of the mighty enemy whom England and Holland had to encounter in mortal combat. He had pointed out the errors of the Earl's administration—he had fearlessly, earnestly, but respectfully deplored the misplaced parsimony of the Queen—he had warned her against the delusions which had taken possession of her keen intellect—he had done his best to place the governor-general upon good terms with the States and with his sovereign; but it had been impossible for him to further his schemes for the acquisition of a virtual sovereignty over the Netherlands, or to extinguish the suspicions of the States that the Queen was secretly negotiating with the Spaniard, when he knew those suspicions to be just.

For deeds, such as these, the able and high-minded ambassador, the accomplished statesman and poet, was forbidden to approach his sovereign's presence, and was ignominiously imprisoned in his own house until the death of Leicester. After that event, Buckhurst emerged from confinement, received the order of the garter and the Earldom of Dorset, and on the death of Burghley succeeded that statesman in the office of Lord-Treasurer. Such was the substantial recognition of the merits of a man who was now disgraced for the conscientious discharge of the most important functions that had yet been confided to him.

It would be a thankless and superfluous task to give the details of the renewed attempt, during a few months, made by Leicester to govern the Provinces. His second administration consisted mainly of the same altercations with the States, on the subject of sovereignty, the same mutual re-creminations and wranglings, that had characterized the period

of his former rule. He rarely met the States in person, and almost never resided at the Hague, holding his court at Middleburg, Dort, or Utrecht, as his humour led him.

The one great feature of the autumn of 1587 was the private negotiation between Elizabeth and the Duke of Parma.

Before taking a glance at the nature of those secrets, however, it is necessary to make a passing allusion to an event which might have seemed likely to render all pacific communications with Spain, whether secret or open, superfluous.

For while so much time had been lost in England and Holland, by misunderstandings and jealousies, there was one Englishman who had not been losing time. In the winter and early spring of 1587, the Devonshire skipper had organized that expedition which he had come to the Netherlands, the preceding autumn, to discuss. He meant to aim a blow at the very heart of that project which Philip was shrouding with so much mystery, and which Elizabeth was attempting to counteract by so much diplomacy.

On the 2nd April, Francis Drake sailed from Plymouth with four ships belonging to the Queen, and with twenty-four furnished by the merchants of London, and other private individuals. It was a bold buccaneering expedition—combining chivalrous enterprise with the chance of enormous profit—which was most suited to the character of English adventurers at that expanding epoch. For it was by England, not by Elizabeth, that the quarrel with Spain was felt to be a mortal one. It was England, not its sovereign, that was instinctively arming, at all points, to grapple with the great enemy of European liberty. It was the spirit of self-help, of self-reliance, which was prompting the English nation to take the great work of the age into its own hands. The mercantile instinct of the nation was flattered with the prospect of gain, the martial quality of its patrician and of its plebeian blood was eager to confront danger, the great Protestant mutiny against a decrepid superstition in combination with an aggressive tyranny, all impelled the best energies of the English

people against Spain, as the embodiment of all which was odious and menacing to them, and with which they felt that the life and death struggle could not long be deferred.

And of these various tendencies, there were no more fitting representatives than Drake and Frobisher, Hawkins and Essex, Cavendish and Grenfell, and the other privateersmen of the sixteenth century. The same greed for danger, for gold, and for power, which, seven centuries before, had sent the Norman race forth to conquer all Christendom, was now sending its Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman kindred to take possession of the old world and the new.

"The wind commands me away," said Drake on the 2nd April, 1587; "our ship is under sail. God grant that we may so live in His fear, that the enemy may have cause to say that God doth fight for her Majesty abroad as well as at home."¹

But he felt that he was not without enemies behind him, for the strong influence brought to bear against the bold policy which Walsingham favoured, was no secret to Drake. "If we deserve ill," said he, "let us be punished. If we discharge our duty, in doing our best, it is a hard measure to be reported ill by those who will either keep their fingers out of the fire, or who too well affect that alteration in our government which I hope in God they shall never live to see."² In latitude 40° he spoke two Zeeland ships, homeward bound, and obtained information of great warlike stores accumulating in Cadiz and Lisbon. His mind was instantly made up. Fortunately, the pinnace which the Queen despatched with orders to stay his hand³ in the very act of smiting her great adversary, did not sail fast enough to overtake the swift corsair and his fleet. Sir Francis had too promptly obeyed the wind, when it "commanded him away," to receive the royal countermand. On the 19th April, the English ships entered the harbour of Cadiz, and destroyed ten thousand tons of shipping, with their contents, in the very face of a dozen great

¹ Drake to Walsingham in Barrow's 'Life of Drake' (Murray, 1843), p. 223.

² Ibid.

³ Walsingham to Leicester, 17 April, 1587. Same to same, 11 April, 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, C. xi. p. 327-344 MSS.)

galleys, which the nimble English vessels soon drove under their forts for shelter. Two nights and a day, Sir Francis, that "hater of idleness," was steadily doing his work; unloading, rifling, scuttling, sinking, and burning those transport-ships which contained a portion of the preparations painfully made by Philip for his great enterprise. Pipe-staves and spikes, horse-shoes and saddles, timber and cutlasses, wine, oil, figs, raisins, biscuits, and flour, a miscellaneous mass of ingredients long brewing for the trouble of England, were emptied into the harbour, and before the second night, the blaze of a hundred and fifty burning vessels played merrily upon the grim walls of Philip's fortresses. Some of these ships were of the largest size then known. There was one belonging to Marquis Santa Cruz of 1500 tons, there was a Biscayan of 1200, there were several others of 1000, 800, and of nearly equal dimensions.

Thence sailing for Lisbon, Sir Francis captured and destroyed a hundred vessels more, appropriating what was portable of the cargoes, and annihilating the rest. At Lisbon, Marquis Santa Cruz, lord high admiral of Spain and generalissimo of the invasion, looked on, mortified and amazed, but offering no combat, while the Plymouth privateersman swept the harbour of the great monarch of the world. After thoroughly accomplishing his work, Drake sent a message to Santa Cruz, proposing to exchange his prisoners for such Englishmen as might then be confined in Spain. But the Marquis denied all prisoners. Thereupon Sir Francis decided to sell his captives to the Moors, and to appropriate the proceeds of the sale towards the purchase of English slaves out of the same bondage.¹ Such was the fortune of war in the sixteenth century.

Having dealt these great blows, Drake set sail again from Lisbon, and, twenty leagues from St. Michaels, fell in with one of those famous Spanish East Indiamen, called carracks, then the great wonder of the seas. This vessel, San Felipe by name, with a cargo of extraordinary value, was easily cap-

¹ Barrow, 232, 233.

tured, and Sir Francis now determined to return. He had done a good piece of work in a few weeks, but he was by no means of opinion that he had materially crippled the enemy. On the contrary, he gave the government warning as to the enormous power and vast preparations of Spain. "There would be forty thousand men under way ere long," he said, "well equipped and provisioned ;" and he stated, as the result of personal observation, that England could not be too energetic in its measures of resistance. He had done something with his little fleet, but he was no braggart, and had no disposition to underrate the enemy's power. "God make us all thankful again and again," he observed, "that we have, *although it be little, made a beginning upon the coast of Spain.*"¹ And modestly as he spoke of what he had accomplished, so with quiet self-reliance did he allude to the probable consequences. It was certain, he intimated, that the enemy would soon seek revenge with all his strength, and "with all the devices and traps he could devise." This was a matter which could not be doubted. "But," said Sir Francis, "I thank them much that they have staid so long, and when they come they *shall be but the sons of mortal men.*"²

Perhaps the most precious result of the expedition, was the lesson which the Englishmen had thus learned in handling the great galleys of Spain. It might soon stand them in stead. The little war-vessels which had come from Plymouth, had sailed round and found these vast unwieldy hulks, and had fairly driven them off the field, with very slight damage to themselves. Sir Francis had already taught the mariners of England, even if he had done nothing else by this famous Cadiz expedition, that an armada of Spain might not be so invincible as men imagined.

Yet when the conqueror returned from his great foray, he received no laurels. His sovereign met him, not with smiles, but with frowns and cold rebukes. He had done his duty, and helped to save her endangered throne, but Elizabeth was

¹ Barrow, 233.

² Ibid. Compare Camden, III. 396.

Meteren, xiv. 253, 254. Bor, II. **xxi**
753-768, **xxii.** 981, **xxiii.** 77.

now the dear friend of Alexander Farnese, and in amicable correspondence with his royal master. This "little" beginning on the coast of Spain might not seem to his Catholic Majesty a matter to be thankful for, nor be likely to further a pacification, and so Elizabeth hastened to disavow her Plymouth captain.¹

¹ "True it is, and I avow it on my faith, her Majesty did send a ship expressly before he went to Cadiz with a message by letters charging Sir Francis Drake *not to show any act of hostility*, which messenger by contrary winds could never come to the place where he was, but was constrained to come home, and hearing of Sir F. Drake's actions, her Majesty commanded the party that returned to have been punished, but that he acquitted himself by the oaths of himself and all his company. *And so unwitting yea unwilling to her Majesty* those actions were committed by Sir F. Drake, for the which her Majesty *is as yet greatly offended with him.*" Burghley to Andreas de Loo, 18 July, 1587. 'Flanders Correspondence.' (S. P. Office MS.)

"There are letters written to Sir Francis Drake," said Walsingham, "sent unto him by a pinnace sent forth especially for that purpose, to command him not to attempt anything by land, nor to enter into the ports to distress the ships. This resolution procéedeth altogether upon a hope of peace which I fear will draw a dangerous war upon her Majesty, by the alienation of the hearts of the well-affected people in the Low Countries." Walsingham to Leicester, 11 April, 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, C. xi. p. 344. MS.)

And again, a week later—"As for Spain," says the Secretary, "they are so far off from any intention to assail England, as they stand now upon their own guard for fear of Sir Francis Drake. There are letters written from certain of my lords, by her Majesty's effectual commandment, to inhibit him to attempt anything by land, or within the ports of the kingdom of Spain. He is at liberty to take any of the King's fleets, either going out of Spain or returning into Spain. There is a bruit given out upon the despatch of these letters that there is order given for his revocation." Same to same, 17 April, 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, C. xi. p. 327. MS.)

It is somewhat amusing, on the other hand, to find Leicester claiming credit for her Majesty, for this demonstration against Spain, and using it in his communications with the States as a proof of her hostile intentions towards that power. "There is no such meaning in her Majesty to abuse you," he observed, "as you might perceive both by the sending of Sir Francis Drake into Spain and by the return of myself hither, to have prosecuted the war if I had found any means here." Leicester to the States, 6 Sept. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

CHAPTER XVII.

Secret Treaty between Queen and Parma—Excitement and Alarm in the States—Religious Persecution in England—Queen's Sincerity toward Spain—Language and Letters of Parma—Negotiations of De Loo—English Commissioners appointed—Parma's affectionate Letter to the Queen—Philip at his Writing-Table—His Plots with Parma against England—Parma's secret Letters to the King—Philip's Letters to Parma—Wonderful Duplicity of Philip—His sanguine Views as to England—He is reluctant to hear of the Obstacles—and imagines Parma in England—But Alexander's Difficulties are great—He denounces Philip's wild Schemes—Walsingham aware of the Spanish Plot—which the States well understand—Leicester's great Unpopularity—The Queen warned against Treating—Leicester's Schemes against Barneveld—Leicestrian Conspiracy at Leyden—The Plot to seize the City discovered—Three Ring-leaders sentenced to Death—Civil War in France—Victory gained by Navarre, and one by Guise—Queen recalls Leicester—Who retires on ill Terms with the States—Queen warned as to Spanish Designs—Results of Leicester's Administration.

THE course of Elizabeth towards the Provinces, in the matter of the peace, was certainly not ingenuous, but it was not absolutely deceitful. She concealed and denied the negotiations, when the Netherland statesmen were perfectly aware of their existence, if not of their tenour; but she was not prepared, as they suspected, to sacrifice their liberties and their religion, as the price of her own reconciliation with Spain. Her attitude towards the States was imperious, over-bearing, and abusive. She had allowed the Earl of Leicester to return, she said, because of her love for the poor and oppressed people, but in many of her official and in all her private communications, she denounced the men who governed that people as ungrateful wretches and impudent liars.¹

¹ *E. g.* "Nous avons renvoyé notre cousin de Leycestre—nonobstant que nous fussions à peu pres degoutés . . . vus les desordres et confusions depuis son partement de là . . . les traverses ingrates de quelques uns mal affectés par de là, dont nous memes avons en occasion de bien fort nous repentir. Toutefois la consideration que nous

avons eu de l'innocence d'un si bon peuple, et le desir qu'avons eu de leur bien, jointe la prompte volonté de notre cousin, ont eu plus de force a nous retenir en notre premiere affection . . . et attendons que ce qu'est passé sera réparé à l'avenir . . ." Queen to State-Council, 20 June, 1587. (S. P. Office, MS.) A letter to the States, of nearly

These were the corrosives and vinegar which she thought suitable for the case; and the Earl was never weary in depicting the same statesmen as seditious, pestilent, self-seeking, mischief-making traitors. These secret, informal negotiations, had been carried on during most of the year 1587. It was the "comptroller's peace," as Walsingham contemptuously designated the attempted treaty; for it will be recollected that Sir James Croft, a personage of very mediocre abilities, had always been more busy than any other English politician in these transactions. He acted, however, on the inspiration of Burghley, who drew his own from the fountain-head.

But it was in vain for the Queen to affect concealment. The States knew everything which was passing, before Leicester knew. His own secret instructions reached the Netherlands before he did. His secretary, Junius, was thrown into prison, and his master's letter taken from him, before there had been any time to act upon its treacherous suggestions.¹ When the Earl wrote letters with his own hand to his sovereign, of so secret a nature that he did not even retain a

the same date, is likewise filled with expressions of her disgust at the "*étrange et ingrate maniere de vos deportements envers notre cousin, votre ingratitude et traverses,*" and of praise of the cousin, who, "*nonobstant toutes ces discourtesies et ingrattitudes, ne voudra espargner pour le bien de vous tous de hasarder ni sa vie ni sa fortune,*" &c. Queen to States, 22 June, 1587. (S. P. Office, MS.)

And three months later—"How the town of Sluys was lost, we will spare to write, that which thousands of your native people did affirm, how traitorously this town was lost, or rather betrayed, the world knoweth, and we do not think that yourselves can deny it, from want of supply from you and your chieftains, . . . and yet not without the honour and reputation of ours that defended it. . . . Our lieutenant (Leicester) could not have convenient time to deal with you (about the peace), for that he was so entangled with your overthwart dealing against him, with

sundry false reports of us and himself, that we had agreed to a peace with the King of Spain, without regard to you. . . . That the Earl of Leicester was by us directed to surprise divers towns, to yield to the King, if you would not assent to peace, with many more such false and slanderous bruits spread—yea believed and maintained for some time by some of your own number, all which we affirm on the word of a prince, most false and maliciously devised with devilish minds, abhorring, as it seemeth, all liking of godly peace and quietness," &c. Queen to the States, 20 Sept. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

¹ Meteren, xiv. 255. "This letter they have taken perforce from him, and committed first my man to prison, which I think was never durst to be attempted before, and puts me past my patience, I assure you." Leicester to Walsingham, 4 July, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

single copy for himself, for fear of discovery, he found, to his infinite disgust, that the States were at once provided with an authentic transcript of every line that he had written.¹ It was therefore useless, almost puerile, to deny facts which were quite as much within the knowledge of the Netherlanders as of himself. The worst consequence of the concealment was, that a deeper treachery was thought possible than actually existed. "The fellow they call Barneveld,"² as Leicester was in the habit of designating one of the first statesmen in Europe, was perhaps justified, knowing what he did, in suspecting more. Being furnished with a list of commissioners, already secretly agreed upon between the English and Spanish governments, to treat for peace, while at the same time the Earl was beating his breast, and flatly denying that there was any intention of treating with Parma at all, it was not unnatural that he should imagine a still wider and deeper scheme than really existed, against the best interests of his country. He may have expressed, in private conversation, some suspicions of this nature, but there is direct evidence that he never stated in public anything which was not afterwards proved to be matter of fact, or of legitimate inference from the secret document which had come into his hands. The Queen exhausted herself in opprobrious language against those who dared to impute to her a design to obtain possession of the cities and strong places of the Netherlands, in order to secure a position in which to compel the Provinces into obedience to her policy. She urged, with much logic, that

¹ "I am credibly informed by an honest man," says Leicester, "who says he saw it, that the States have a copy of my last instrument, as also of the letter of her Majesty written lately privately to me, touching the dealing in the peace. Yea, further, that they are thoroughly and particularly made acquainted with a late letter of mine to her Majesty, written with my own hand, whereof I would have no copy taken, because I would have no man acquaint with it. In which letter I informed her Majesty at length of all things here, and gave her also, in

some sort, my private advice. They have, by some means, got knowledge of the contents thereof, and have intimated the same secretly to the Provinces, intending thereby to draw me into hatred and suspicion of the people, as though this dealing for peace were procured for me. But for this matter, I shall hope to deal well enough, for this treacherous usage of her Majesty's secrets," &c. Leicester to Walsingham, 28 Aug. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Leicester to Burghley, 10-11 Sept. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

as she had refused the sovereignty of the whole country when offered to her, she was not likely to form surreptitious schemes to make herself mistress of a portion of it. On the other hand, it was very obvious, that to accept the sovereignty of Philip's rebellious Provinces, was to declare war upon Philip; whereas, had she been pacifically inclined towards that sovereign, and treacherously disposed towards the Netherlands, it would be a decided advantage to her to have those strong places in her power. But the suspicions as to her good faith were exaggerated. As to the intentions of Leicester, the States were justified in their almost unlimited distrust. It is very certain that both in 1586, and again, at this very moment, when Elizabeth was most vehement in denouncing such aspersions on her government, he had unequivocally declared to her his intention of getting possession, if possible, of several cities, and of the whole Island of Walcheren, which, together with the cautionary towns already in his power, would enable the Queen to make good terms for herself with Spain, "*if the worst came to the worst.*"¹ It will also soon be shown that he did his best to carry these schemes into execution. There is no evidence, however, and no probability, that he had received the royal commands to perpetrate such a crime.

The States believed also, that in those secret negotiations with Parma the Queen was disposed to sacrifice the religious

¹ "I will go to Medenblik (the next town to Enkhuyzen), which is at your Majesty's devotion, as the governor thereof (Soroy) is, and will do my best to recover Enkhuyzen ere I depart thence. Then, indeed, your Majesty, *having Flushing, Brill, and Utrecht*, as you have, and these, ye shall be able to bring the peace to better conditions, *and bridle these States of Holland at your pleasure.*

... They are full of shifts, and yet *such as for this matter* may ask toleration, for *how hateful a matter peace hath been to the generality* almost of all these countries, is *well known to all persons*, and how loathsome a thing *it is to all* but to such as for love, and trust in your Majesty will re-form themselves, I can sufficiently testify; and it is the only cause of the

world for them to be careful in their dealing, for it doth confirm them and their posterity both in their lives and liberties, and therefore to be borne withal, if they take deliberation." Leicester to the Queen, 9 Oct. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.) Yet the Earl, notwithstanding this admission, avows his determination of *bridling* the States by gaining possession of their cities.

And again, a month later: "I will not be idle to do all that in me shall lie to make this island of *Walcheren* assured, whatsoever shall fall out: which, if it may be, *your Majesty shall the less fear to make a good bargain for yourself*, when the worst shall come." Leicester to the Queen, 5th Nov. 1587. (S. P. Office, MS.)

interests of the Netherlands. In this they were mistaken. But they had reason for their mistake, because the negotiator De Loo, had expressly said, that, in her overtures to Farnese, she had abandoned that point altogether.¹ If this had been so, it would have simply been a consent on the part of Elizabeth, that the Catholic religion and the Inquisition should be re-established in the Provinces, to the exclusion of every other form of worship or polity. In truth, however, the position taken by her Majesty on the subject was as fair as could be reasonably expected. Certainly she was no advocate for religious *liberty*. She chose that her own subjects should be Protestants, because she had chosen to be a Protestant herself, and because it was an incident of her supremacy, to dictate uniformity of creed to all beneath her sceptre. No more than her father, who sent to the stake or gallows heretics to transubstantiation as well as believers in the Pope, had Elizabeth the faintest idea of religious freedom. Heretics to the English Church were persecuted, fined, imprisoned, mutilated, and murdered, by sword, rope, and fire. In some respects, the practice towards those who dissented from Elizabeth was more immoral and illogical, even if less cruel, than that to which those were subjected who rebelled against Sixtus. The Act of Uniformity required Papists to assist at the Protestant worship, but wealthy Papists could obtain immunity by an enormous fine. The Roman excuse to destroy bodies in order to save souls, could scarcely be alledged by a Church which might be bribed into connivance at heresy, and which derived a revenue from the very nonconformity for which humbler victims were sent to the gallows. It would, however, be unjust in the extreme to overlook the enormous difference in the amount of persecution, exercised respectively by the Protestant and the Roman Church. It is probable that not many more than two hundred Catholics² were executed

¹ "I have sent her Majesty another letter from De Loo, whereby it seemeth that now very lately her Majesty hath given him to understand that she will not insist upon the matter of religion further than shall be with the King's honour and conscience. Whereupon

De Loo taketh no small hold, and if she keep that course, all will go to ruin, as I have written to her Majesty." Buckhurst to Walsingham, 18 June, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² "Dod reckons them at 191; Milner has raised the list to 204. Fifteen

as such, in Elizabeth's reign, and this was ten score too many. But what was this against eight hundred heretics burned, hanged, and drowned, in one Easter week by Alva, against the eighteen thousand two hundred sent to stake and scaffold, as he boasted during his administration, against the vast numbers of Protestants, whether they be counted by tens or by hundreds of thousands, who perished by the edicts of Charles V., in the Netherlands, or in the single Saint Bartholomew Massacre in France? Moreover, it should never be forgotten—from undue anxiety for impartiality—that most of the Catholics who were executed in England, suffered as conspirators rather than as heretics. No foreign potentate, claiming to be vicegerent of Christ, had denounced Philip as a bastard and usurper, or had, by means of a blasphemous fiction, which then was a terrible reality, severed the bonds of allegiance by which his subjects were held, cut him off from all communion with his fellow-creatures, and promised temporal rewards and a crown of glory in heaven to those who should succeed in depriving him of throne and life. Yet this was the position of Elizabeth. It was war to the knife between her and Rome, declared by Rome itself; nor was there any doubt whatever that the Seminary Priests—seedlings transplanted from foreign nurseries, which were as watered gardens for the growth of treason—were a perpetually organized band of conspirators and assassins, with whom it was hardly an act of excessive barbarity to deal in somewhat summary fashion. Doubtless it would have been a more lofty

of these, according to him, suffered for denying the Queen's supremacy, 126 for exercising their ministry, and the rest for being reconciled to the Romish church. Many others died of hardships in prison, and many were deprived of their property. There seems, nevertheless, to be good reason for doubting whether any one who was executed might not have saved his life by explicitly denying the Pope's power to depose the Queen. This certainly furnishes a distinction between the persecution under Elizabeth (which, unjust as it was in its

operation, yet, so far as it extended to capital inflictions, had in view the security of the government) and that which the Protestants had sustained in her sister's reign, springing from mere bigotry and vindictive rancour." (Hallam's 'Constitutional History,' fifth edition. Murray, 1846. I. 163. Compare Lingard, viii. 356, 513, Strype, iii. iv., and see in particular, chapters iii. and iv. of Hallam, in which the dealings of Elizabeth in religious matters are profoundly investigated.)

policy, and a far more intelligent one, to extend towards the Catholics of England, who as a body were loyal to their country, an ample toleration. But it could scarcely be expected that Elizabeth Tudor, as imperious and absolute by temperament as her father had ever been, would be capable of embodying that great principle.

When, in the preliminaries to the negotiations of 1587, therefore, it was urged on the part of Spain, that the Queen was demanding a concession of religious liberty from Philip to the Netherlanders which she refused to English heretics, and that he only claimed the same right of dictating a creed to his subjects which she exercised in regard to her own, Lord Burghley replied that the statement was correct. The Queen permitted—it was true—no man to profess any religion but the one which she professed. At the same time it was declared to be unjust, that those persons in the Netherlands who had been for years in the habit of practising Protestant rites, should be *suddenly* compelled, *without instruction*, to abandon that form of worship. It was well known that many would rather die than submit to such oppression, and it was affirmed that the exercise of this cruelty would be resisted by her to the uttermost. There was no hint of the propriety—on any logical basis—of leaving the question of creed as a matter between man and his Maker, with which any dictation on the part of crown or state was an act of odious tyranny. There was not even a suggestion that the Protestant doctrines were true, and the Catholic doctrines false. The matter was merely taken up on the *uti possidetis* principle, that they who had acquired the fact of Protestant worship had a right to retain it, and could not justly be deprived of it, except by instruction and persuasion. It was also affirmed that it was not the English practice to inquire into men's consciences. It would have been difficult, however, to make that very clear to Philip's comprehension, because, if men, women, and children, were scourged with rods, imprisoned, and hanged, if they refused to conform publicly to a ceremony at which their consciences revolted—unless they had money enough to pur-

chase non-conformity—it seemed to be the practice to inquire very effectively into their consciences.¹

But if there was a certain degree of disingenuousness on the part of Elizabeth towards the States, her attitude towards Parma was one of perfect sincerity. A perusal of the secret correspondence leaves no doubt whatever on that point. She was seriously and fervently desirous of peace with Spain. On the part of Farnese and his master, there was the most unscrupulous mendacity, while the confiding simplicity and truthfulness of the Queen in these negotiations was almost pathetic. Especially she declared her trust in the loyal and upright character of Parma; in which she was sure of never being disappointed. It is only doing justice to Alexander to say that he was as much deceived by her frankness as she by his falsehood. It never entered his head that a royal personage and the trusted counsellors of a great kingdom could be telling the truth in a secret international transaction, and

¹ “And when De Loo reporteth an objection made to him, that there is no more reason for the King to yield to any of his subjects liberty of religion contrary to the one he professeth no more than her Majesty doth to any of hers; indeed, at the first appearance, this objection seemeth of good moment to be allowed, and, until it be answered, ought to be taken by the Duke of Parma; but if the diversities of the comparison shall be marked, the case also will therein be changed. The Queen's Majesty *indeed never did permit*, either publicly or privately, that any persons for these seven years should use any exercise of religion contrary to that form received and established by public authority; so as none can challenge that they were by any liberty suffered to use any other, which is contrary to the Low Countries, for the space of about six years. But if her Majesty had so permitted, surely reason would move her not to constrain, otherwise than by instruction, any that by reason of her permission had governed their consciences to the contrary. And because it may be also further objected, as most falsely is divulged, to more

offence against her Majesty from Catholic places, that she doth so severely punish them that are in conscience contrarily affected, it is to be avowed for a certain truth that her Majesty never did allow that any person was by inquisition urged to show his conscience in any matter of faith, nor ever was punished for professing only of his opinion in his conscience, but what any have beside their profession of their conscience, moved by others, by open acts to break the law, or have, under colour of encouraging others to change their form of religion, persuaded them also to alter their obedience in all wordly duties, to practise rebellion in the realm, to solicit invasions, and flatly to deny the Queen's Majesty to be their lawful Queen. In those cases, her Majesty and all her ministers of justice had cause to withstand such violent courses under colours of religion; and otherwise than to withstand these most dangerous attempts, her Majesty did never allow any should lose their lives and shed their blood.” (Rough draft of Burghley, 9 March, 1587 Br. Mus. Galba, C. ix. p. 122, MS.)

he justified the industry with which his master and himself piled fiction upon fiction, by their utter disbelief in every word which came to them from England.

The private negotiations had been commenced, or rather had been renewed, very early in February of this year. During the whole critical period which preceded and followed the execution of Mary, in the course of which the language of Elizabeth towards the States had been so shrewish, there had been the gentlest diplomatic cooing between Farnese and herself. It was—Dear Cousin, you know how truly I confide in your sincerity, how anxious I am that this most desirable peace should be arranged; and it was—Sacred Majesty, you know how much joy I feel in your desire for the repose of the world, and for a solid peace between your Highness and the King my master; how much I delight in concord—*how incapable I am by ambiguous words of spinning out these transactions, or of deceiving your Majesty*, and what a hatred I feel for steel, fire, and blood.¹

Four or five months rolled on, during which Leicester had been wasting time in England, Farnese wasting none before Sluys, and the States doing their best to counteract the schemes both of their enemy and of their ally. De Loo made a visit, in July, to the camp of the Duke of Parma, and received the warmest assurances of his pacific dispositions. "I am much pained," said Alexander, "with this procrastination. I am so full of sincerity myself, that it seems to me a very strange matter, this hostile descent by Drake upon the coasts of Spain. The result of such courses will be, that the

¹ Parma to Queen Elizabeth, 18th Feb. 1587. Same to same, 5 April, 1587. Queen to Parma, 13 April, 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MSS.) And even later still:—

"Such is the good opinion conceived of the Duke of Parma," wrote Burghley, "for his own nature and worthiness in all places, that he is a prince of honour in keeping his promise, without respect of any gain or benefit. And, to tell you true, it is the only foundation which her Majesty

maketh to proceed in this treaty, against the opinion of very many, in that she esteemeth the Duke to have great regard to his word and promise, and also an opinion that she hath, though he be a great man of war, that he is Christianly disposed rather to maintain peace than to raise war, whereof her Majesty looketh to make proof by this treaty," &c. &c. Burghley to Andr. de Loo, 10 Oct. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

King will end by being exasperated, and I shall be touched in my honour—so great is the hopes I have held out of being able to secure a peace. I have ever been and I still am most anxious for concord, from the affection I bear to her sacred Majesty. I have been obliged, much against my will, to take the field again. I could wish now that our negotiations might terminate before the arrival of my fresh troops, namely, 9000 Spaniards and 9000 Italians, which, with Walloons, Germans, and Lorrainers, will give me an effective total of 30,000 soldiers. Of this I give you my word as a gentleman. Go, then, Andrew de Loo,” continued the Duke, “write to her sacred Majesty, that I desire to make peace, and to serve her faithfully ; and that I shall not change my mind, even in case of any great success, for I like to proceed rather by the ways of love than of rigour and effusion of blood.”¹

“I can assure you, oh, most serene Duke,” replied Andrew, “that the most serene Queen is in the very same dispositions with yourself.”

“Excellent well then,” said the Duke, “we shall come to an agreement at once, and the sooner the deputies on both sides are appointed the better.”

A feeble proposition was then made, on the part of the peace-loving Andrew, that the hostile operations against Sluys should be at once terminated. But this did not seem so clear to the most serene Duke. He had gone to great expense in that business ; and he had not built bridges, erected forts, and dug mines, only to abandon them for a few fine words. Fine words were plenty, but they raised no sieges. Meantime these pacific and gentle murmurings from Farnese's camp had lulled the Queen into forgetfulness of Roger Williams and Arnold Groenevelt and their men, fighting day and night in trench and mine during that critical midsummer. The wily tongue of the Duke had been more effective than his batteries in obtaining the much-coveted city. The Queen obstinately held back her men and money, confident of effecting

¹ De Loo to Burghley, 11 July, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

a treaty, whether Sluys fell or not. Was it strange that the States should be distrustful of her intentions, and, in their turn, become neglectful of their duty? ¹

And thus summer wore into autumn, Sluys fell, the States and their governor-general were at daggers-drawn, the Netherlanders were full of distrust with regard to England, Alexander hinted doubts as to the Queen's sincerity; the secret negotiations, though fertile in suspicions, jealousies, delays, and such foul weeds, had produced no wholesome fruit, and the 26th Sept., excellent De Loo became very much depressed.

1587. At last a letter from Burghley relieved his drooping spirits. From the most disturbed and melancholy man in the world, he protested, he had now become merry and quiet.² He straightway went off to the Duke of Parma, with the letter in his pocket, and translated it to him by candle-light, as he was careful to state, as an important point in his narrative. And Farnese was fuller of fine phrases than ever.

"There is no cause whatever," said he, in a most loving manner, "to doubt my sincerity. Yet the Lord-Treasurer intimates that the most serene Queen is disposed so to do. But if I had not the very best intentions, and desires for peace, I should never have made the first overtures. If I did not wish a pacific solution, what in the world forced me to do what I have done? On the contrary, it is I that have reason to suspect the other parties with their long delays, by which they have made me lose the best part of the summer."³

He then commented on the strong expressions in the English letters, as to the continuance of her Majesty in her pious resolutions; observed that he was thoroughly advised of the

¹ Burghley to De Loo, 18 July, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² "Da turbato e melancolico m' ha del tutto quietato e fatto star allegro," &c. De Loo to Burghley, 26 Sept. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ "Con dire amorevolmente lo che sigue—non e (disse), causa alcuna di dubitare della mia sincera mente—si come sullo fine della 1^a si fa menzione che la ser^{ma} regina lo potrebbe fare—perche se non avessi havuto boniss^{ma}

disposizione e desiderio della pace non sarei gia ito a farne la prima apertura mi medesimo, e condescendere alle cose che sapete (disse a me) se non si fosse stata intenzione di volerne venir a una conclusione (aggiungendo) che cosa mi forzava di farlo? Anzi piuttosto avrei occasione io di sospettar loro con tante sorte di dilazioni e haver mi fatto perdere la miglior parte de l' estate," &c. (Ibid.)

disputes between the Earl of Leicester and the States ; and added that it was very important for the deputies to arrive at the time indicated by the Queen.

"Whatever is to be done," said he, in conclusion, "let it be done quickly ;" and with that he said he would go and eat a bit of supper.

"And may I communicate Lord Burghley's letter to any one else ?" asked De Loo.

"Yes, yes, to the Seigneur de Champagny, and to my secretary Cosimo," answered his Highness.

So the merchant negotiator proceeded at once to the mansion of Champagny, in company with the secretary Cosimo. There was a long conference, in which De Loo was informed of many things which he thoroughly believed, and faithfully transmitted to the court of Elizabeth. Alexander had done his best, they said, to delay the arrival of his fresh troops. He had withdrawn from the field, on various pretexts, hoping, day after day, that the English commissioners would arrive, and that a firm and perpetual peace would succeed to the miseries of war. But as time wore away, and there came no commissioners, the Duke had come to the painful conclusion that he had been trifled with.¹ His forces would now be sent into Holland to find something to eat ; and this would ensure the total destruction of all that territory. He had also written to command all the officers of the coming troops to hasten their march, in order that he might avoid incurring still deeper censure. He was much ashamed, in truth, to have been wheedled into passing the whole fine season in idleness.² He had been sacrificing himself for her sacred Majesty, and to serve her best interests ; and now he found himself the object of her mirth.³ Those who ought to be well informed had assured him that the Queen was only waiting to see how the King of Navarre was getting on with the auxiliary force just going to him from Germany, that she had no intention

¹ "Ma a l'ultimo il Duca vedendo la continua dilazione, con giudicare che si burlasse," &c. (De Loo to Burghley, MS. last cited.)

² "Trovandosi vergogniato d'avere, lasciato scorrere sì bella stagione in ozio," &c. (Ibid.)

³ Ibid.

whatever to make peace, and that, before long, he might expect all these German mercenaries upon his shoulders in the Netherlands. Nevertheless he was prepared to receive them with 40,000 good infantry, a splendid cavalry force, and plenty of money.¹

All this and more did the credulous Andrew greedily devour, and he lost no time in communicating the important intelligence to her Majesty and the Lord-Treasurer. He implored her, he said, upon his bare knees, prostrate on the ground, and from the most profound and veritable centre of his heart and with all his soul and all his strength,² to believe in the truth of the matters thus confided to him. He would pledge his immortal soul, which was of more value to him—as he correctly observed—than even the crown of Spain, that the King, the Duke, and his counsellors, were most sincerely desirous of peace, and actuated by the most loving and benevolent motives. Alexander Farnese was “the antidote to the Duke of Alva,” kindly sent by heaven, *ut contraria contrariis curenter*, and if the entire security of the sacred Queen were not now obtained, together with a perfect re-integration of love between her Majesty and the King of Spain, and with the assured tranquillity and perpetual prosperity of the Netherlands, it would be the fault of England, not of Spain.³

And no doubt the merchant believed all that was told him, and—what was worse—that he fully impressed his own convictions upon her Majesty and Lord Burghley, to say nothing of the comptroller, who, poor man, had great facility in believing anything that came from the court of the most Catholic King. Yet it is painful to reflect, that in all these communications of Alexander and his agents, there was not one single word of truth. It was all false from beginning to end, as to the countermanding of the troops, as to the pacific intentions of the King and Duke, and as to the proposed campaign in Friesland, in case of rupture, and all the rest. But this will be conclusively proved a little later.

¹ De Loo to Burghley, MS. last cited.

² “Flexis nudisque genibus humi prostratus, dal piu profondo e vero

centro del mio cuore et ex corde et ex tota anima,” &c. (Ibid.)

³ Ibid.

Meantime the conference had been most amicable and satisfactory. And when business was over, Champagne—not a whit the worse for the severe jilting which he had so recently sustained from the widow De Bours, now Mrs. Aristotle Patton—invited De Loo and Secretary Cosimo to supper. And the three made a night of it, sitting up late, and draining such huge bumpers to the health of the Queen of England, that—as the excellent Andrew subsequently informed Lord Burghley—his head ached most bravely next morning.¹

And so, amid the din of hostile preparation not only in Cadiz and Lisbon, but in Ghent and Sluys and Antwerp, the import of which it seemed difficult to mistake, the comedy of negotiation was still rehearsing, and the principal actors were already familiar with their respective parts. There were the Earl of Derby, knight of the garter, and my Lord Cobham, and puzzling James Croft, and other Englishmen, actually believing that the farce was a solemn reality. There was Alexander of Parma thoroughly aware of the contrary. There was Andrew de Loo, more talkative, more credulous, more busy than ever, and more fully impressed with the importance of his mission, and there was the white-bearded Lord-Treasurer turning complicated paragraphs, shaking his head, and waving his wand across the water, as if, by such expedients, the storm about to burst over England could be dispersed.

The commissioners should come, if only the Duke of Parma would declare on his word of honour, that these hostile preparations with which all Christendom was ringing, were not intended against England; or—if that really were the case—if he would request his master to abandon all such schemes, and if Philip in consequence would promise on the honour of a prince, to make no hostile attempts against that country.²

¹ "Con sommo contentamento del uno e l' altro, a tal segno, che tenendoci il Sr de Champigny a cena, con far li ragione di buon cuore d' un gran brindisi che fece alla sanità di sua sacra Maesta, mi dolse (con licenza per dirlo come va) la mattina seguente

bravamente la testa." A. de Loo to Burghley, 26 Sept. 1587. (S. P. Office, MS.)

² "If you can possibly, I require you to obtain of the Duke, in writing under his hand, an assurance either of his knowledge that these preparations are

There would really seem an almost Arcadian simplicity in such demands, coming from so practised a statesman as the Lord-Treasurer, and from a woman of such brilliant intellect as Elizabeth unquestionably possessed. But we read the history of 1587, not only by the light of subsequent events, but by the almost microscopic revelations of sentiments and motives, which a full perusal of the secret documents in those ancient cabinets, afford. At that moment it was not ignorance nor dulness which was leading England towards the pitfall so artfully dug by Spain. There was trust in the plighted word of a chivalrous soldier like Alexander Farnese,¹ of a most religious and anointed monarch like Philip II. English frankness, playing cards upon the table, was no match for Italian and Spanish legerdemain,—a system according to which, to defraud the antagonist by every kind of falsehood and trickery was the legitimate end of diplomacy and statesmanship. It was well known that there were great preparations in Spain, Portugal, and the obedient Netherlands, by land and sea. But Sir Robert Sidney² was persuaded that the expedition was intended for Africa; even the Pope was

not nor shall be meant against any of her Majesty's dominions; or otherwise, if he be not able to assure the same, then, at the least, that he will, by his writing, assure her Majesty that he will, upon his honour, with all expedition, send to the King his advice to stay all hostile actions, or to have the King's answer, like a prince of honour, whether he intendeth or no to employ these forces against her Majesty, which, though in some construction may seem hard to require of a king intending hostility, yet, as the case is, when her Majesty yieldeth to a cessation of arms, and to a treaty of peace with the king, is a request most reasonable to make, and honourable for the king to grant. . . . Such are the frequent reports out of Spain of these preparations, and yet *her Majesty will stand to the Duke's answer*, if the army shall not be known to be actually prepared against England—which, if it shall be, no man will think it meet that her commissioners

should come." Burghley to A. De Loo, 10 Oct. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

¹ As early as August, the Duke had proposed a cessation of arms, to grant which, as has been abundantly shown by his private correspondence, was never in his thoughts. "The Duke of Parma, to the end the treaty may proceed with better success, hath made offer unto us to yield to a cessation of arms, having put us also in hope that such forces as are now preparing in Italy, amounting to 15,000 footmen, at the least, shall be stayed." Queen to Leicester, 9 Aug. 1587. (Br. Mus. Galba, D. I. 293, MS.)

² "There came some out of Spain very lately, that say the preparations there are for a certain place in Africk, which greatly imports the passage of both the Indies. The admiral of the Turks was to leave it last year with sixty galleys." Sir R. Sidney to Leicester, 31 Dec. 1587. (Br. Mus. Galba, D. II. p. 288, MS.)

completely mystified—to the intense delight of Philip—and Burghley, enlightened by the sagacious De Loo, was convinced, that even in case of a rupture, the whole strength of the Spanish arms was to be exerted in reducing Friesland and Overysse. But Walsingham was never deceived ; for he had learned from Demosthenes a lesson with which William the Silent, in his famous Apology, had made the world familiar, that *the only citadel against a tyrant and a conqueror was distrust.*

Alexander, much grieved that doubts should still be felt as to his sincerity, renewed the most exuberant expressions of that sentiment, together with gentle complaints against the dilatoriness which had proceeded from the doubt. Her Majesty had long been aware, he said, of his anxiety to bring about a perfect reconciliation ; but he had waited, month after month, for her commissioners, and had waited in vain. His hopes had been dashed to the ground. The affair had been indefinitely spun out, and he could not resist the conviction that her Majesty had changed her mind. Nevertheless, as Andrew de Loo was again proceeding to England, the Duke seized the opportunity once more to kiss her hand, and—although he had well nigh resolved to think no more on the subject—to renew his declarations, that, if the much-coveted peace were not concluded, the blame could not be imputed to him, and that he should stand guiltless before God and the world. He had done, and was still ready to do, all which became a Christian and a man desirous of the public welfare and tranquillity.¹

¹ “E così da canto mio haveva preparato gli affari di maniera, e messo il tutto in termine, che V^{ra} Ma^{te} haveva potuto conoscere qual zelo ch' io abbracciava questa occasione, e quanto io desiderava di veder rivertire la buona e mutua intelligenza fra il Re mio signore et la V^{ra} Ma^{te}. Ma vedendo che non obstante le tante speranze che m' eravano state date della venuta dei commissarii di V^{ra} Ma^{te}, la cosa si va tuttavia tirando al lungo, io non po so se non dubitare ch' ella habbia mutato

d' opinione, e se ben io ero quasi risoluto di non ci pensar piu, tuttavia ritornandocene per di la il detto Andrea mi parse di scriver ancor questi pochi versi, tanto per non perder l' occasione di baciare humil^{te} le mani a V^{ra} Ma^{te} quanto per assigurarla che non restara per me, che la risoluzione presa, non passi avanti, e che succedendo altrimenti ne saro scusato inanzi a Dio et al mondo, e havero almeno satisfatto a me medesimo, d' haver fatto quello che l' obbligo Christiano,

When Burghley read these fine phrases, he was much impressed ; and they were pronounced at the English court to be " very princely and Christianly." An elaborate comment too was drawn up by the comptroller on every line of the letter. " These be very good words," said the comptroller.¹

But the Queen was even more pleased with the last proof of the Duke's sincerity, than even Burghley and Croft had been. Disregarding all the warnings of Walsingham, she renewed her expressions of boundless confidence in the wily Italian. " We do assure you," wrote the Lords, " and so you shall do well to avow it to the Duke upon our honours, that her Majesty saith she thinketh both their minds to accord upon one good and Christian meaning, though their ministers may perchance sound upon a discord."² And she repeated her resolution to send over her commissioners, so soon as the Duke had satisfied her as to the hostile preparations.

We have now seen the good faith of the English Queen towards the Spanish government. We have seen her boundless trust in the sincerity of Farnese and his master. We have heard the exuberant professions of an honest intention to bring about a firm and lasting peace, which fell from the lips of Farnese and of his confidential agents. It is now necessary to glide for a moment into the secret cabinet of Philip, in order to satisfy ourselves as to the value of all those professions. The attention of the reader is solicited to these investigations, because the year 1587 was a most critical period in the history of English, Dutch, and European liberty. The coming year 1588 had been long spoken of in prophecy, as the year of doom, perhaps of the destruction of the world, but it was in 1587, the year of expectation and preparation, that the materials were slowly combining out of which that year's history was to be formed.

et di persona desiderosa del bene e
riposo publico m' obligara." Parma
to Queen Elizabeth, ^{Oct. 30}
Nov. 9 1587. (S. P.
Office MS.)

¹ The Lords to A. de Loo, 11 Nov.
1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

And if blunt Sir Roger Williams
had been standing by when the re-
mark was made, he might have ex-
claimed with his countryman, honest
Hugh Evans, " Good words, good
words—good cabbage!"

² Ibid.

And there sat the patient letter-writer in his cabinet, busy with his schemes. His grey head was whitening fast. He was sixty years of age. His frame was slight, his figure stooping, his digestion very weak, his manner more glacial and sepulchral than ever; but if there were a hard-working man in Europe, that man was Philip II. And there he sat at his table, scrawling his apostilles. The fine innumerable threads which stretched across the surface of Christendom, and covered it as with a net, all converged in that silent cheerless cell. France was kept in a state of perpetual civil war; the Netherlands had been converted into a shambles; Ireland was maintained in a state of chronic rebellion; Scotland was torn with internal feuds, regularly organized and paid for by Philip; and its young monarch—"that lying King of Scots," as Leicester called him—was kept in a leash ready to be slipped upon England, when his master should give the word; and England herself was palpitating with the daily expectation of seeing a disciplined horde of brigands let loose upon her shores; and all this misery, past, present, and future, was almost wholly due to the exertions of that grey-haired letter-writer at his peaceful library-table.

At the very beginning of the year the King of Denmark had made an offer to Philip of mediation. The letter, entrusted to a young Count de Rantzan, had been intercepted by the States—the envoy not having availed himself, in time, of his diplomatic capacity, and having in consequence been treated, for a moment, like a prisoner of war. The States had immediately addressed earnest letters of protest to Queen Elizabeth, declaring that nothing which the enemy could do in war was half so horrible to them as the mere mention of peace. Life, honour, religion, liberty, their all, were at stake, they said, and would go down in one universal shipwreck, if peace should be concluded; and they implored her Majesty to avert the proposed intercession of the Danish King.¹ Wilkes wrote to Walsingham,² denouncing that monarch and his ministers as

¹ Bor, II. xxii. 945-948. Meteren, xii. 247.

² Wilkes to Walsingham, 3 Dec. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

stipendiaries of Spain, while, on the other hand, the Duke of Parma, after courteously thanking the King for his offer of mediation, described him to Philip as such a dogged heretic,¹ that no good was to be derived from him, except by meeting his fraudulent offers with an equally fraudulent response. There will be nothing lost, said Alexander, by affecting to listen to his proposals, and meantime your Majesty must proceed with the preparations against England.² This was in the first week of the year 1587.

In February, and almost on the very day when Parma was writing those affectionate letters to Elizabeth, breathing nothing but peace, he was carefully conning Philip's directions in regard to the all-important business of the invasion. He was informed by his master, that one hundred vessels, forty of them of largest size, were quite ready, together with 12,000 Spanish infantry, including 3000 of the old legion, and that there were volunteers more than enough. Philip had also taken note, he said, of Alexander's advice as to choosing the season when the crops in England had just been got in, as the harvest of so fertile a country would easily support an invading force; but he advised nevertheless that the army should be thoroughly victualled at starting.³ Finding that Alexander did not quite approve of the Irish part of the plan, he would reconsider the point, and think more of the Isle of Wight; but perhaps still some other place might be discovered, a descent upon which might inspire that enemy with still greater terror and confusion. It would be difficult for him, he said, to grant the 6000 men asked for by the Scotch malcontents, without seriously weakening his armada; but there must be no positive refusal, for a concerted action with the Scotch lords and their adherents was indispensable. The secret, said the King, had been profoundly kept, and neither in Spain nor in Rome had anything been allowed to transpire. Alexander was warned therefore to do his best to maintain

¹ "Emperrado erege," &c. Parma to Philip, 10 Jan. 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

² Ibid.

³ Philip II. to Parma, 28 Feb. 1587 (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

the mystery, for the enemy was trying very hard to penetrate their actions and their thoughts.¹

And certainly Alexander did his best. He replied to his master, by transmitting copies of the letters he had been writing with his own hand to the Queen, and of the pacific messages he had sent her through Champagny and De Loo.² She is just now somewhat confused, said he, and those of her counsellors who desire peace are more eager than ever for negociation. She is very much afflicted with the loss of Deventer, and is quarrelling with the French ambassador about the new conspiracy for her assassination. The opportunity is a good one, and if she writes an answer to my letter, said Alexander, we can keep the negociation alive, while, if she does not, 'twill be a proof that she has contracted leagues with other parties. But, in any event, the Duke fervently implored Philip not to pause in his preparations for the great enterprise which he had conceived in his royal breast.³ So urgent for the invasion was the peace-loving general.

He alluded also to the supposition that the quarrel between her Majesty and the French envoy was a mere fetch, and only one of the results of Bellievre's mission. Whether that diplomatist had been sent to censure, or in reality to approve, in the name of his master, of the Scottish Queen's execution, Alexander would leave to be discussed by Don Bernardino de Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador in Paris; but he was of opinion that the anger of the Queen with France was a fiction, and her supposed league with France and Germany against Spain a fact.⁴ Upon this point, as it appears from Secretary Walsingham's lamentations, the astute Farnese was mistaken. In truth he was frequently led into error by attributing to the English policy the same serpentine movement and venomous purpose which characterized his own; and we have already seen, that Elizabeth was ready, on the contrary, to quarrel with the States, with France, with all the world, if she could only secure the good-will of Philip.

¹ Philip to Parma, MS. last cited.

² Parma to Philip II. 22 March,

1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

The French matter, indissolubly connected in that monarch's schemes, with his designs upon England and Holland, was causing Alexander much anxiety. He foresaw great difficulty in maintaining that indispensable civil war in France, and thought that a peace might, some fine day, be declared between Henry III. and the Huguenots, when least expected. In consequence, the Duke of Guise was becoming very importunate for Philip's subsidies. "Mucio comes begging to me," said Parma, "with the very greatest earnestness, and utters nothing but lamentations and cries of misery.¹ He asked for 25,000 of the 150,000 ducats promised him. I gave them. Soon afterwards he writes, with just as much anxiety, for 25,000 more. These I did not give; firstly, because I had them not," (which would seem a sufficient reason) "and secondly, because I wished to protract matters as much as possible. He is constantly reminding me of your Majesty's promise of 300,000 ducats, in case he comes to a rupture with the King of France, and I always assure him that your Majesty will keep all promises."²

Philip, on his part, through the months of spring, continued to assure his generalissimo of his steady preparations by sea and land. He had ordered Mendoza to pay the Scotch lords the sum demanded by them, but not till after they had done the deed agreed upon; and as to the 6000 men, he felt obliged, he said, to defer that matter for the moment, and to leave the decision upon it to the Duke.³ Farnese kept his sovereign minutely informed of the negociations carried on through Champagny and De Loo, and expressed his constant opinion that the Queen was influenced by motives as hypocritical as his own. She was only seeking, he said, to deceive, to defraud, to put him to sleep, by those feigned negotiations, while she was making her combinations with France and Germany, for the ruin of Spain. There was no virtue to be expected from her, except she was compelled thereto by pure

¹ "Con grandissima instancia y de clarandome lastimas y miseria." MS. Letter of Parma to Philip, last cited.

² Ibid.

³ Philip to Parma, 15 April 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

necessity.¹ The English, he said, were hated and abhorred by the natives of Holland and Zeeland,² and it behoved Philip to seize so favourable an opportunity for urging on his great plan with all the speed in the world. It might be that the Queen, seeing these mighty preparations, even although not suspecting that she herself was to be invaded, would tremble for her safety, if the Netherlands should be crushed. But if she succeeded in deceiving Spain, and putting Philip and Parma to sleep, she might well boast of having made fools of them all.³ The negotiations for peace and the preparations for the invasion should go simultaneously forward therefore, and the money would, in consequence, come more sparingly to the Provinces from the English coffers, and the disputes between England and the States would be multiplied. The Duke also begged to be informed whether any terms could be laid down, upon which the King really would conclude peace, in order that he might make no mistake for want of instructions or requisite powers. The condition of France was becoming more alarming every day, he said. In other words, there was an ever-growing chance of peace for that distracted country. The Queen of England was cementing a strong league between herself, the French King, and the Huguenots, and matters were looking very serious. The impending peace in France would never do, and Philip should prevent it in time, by giving Mucio his money. Unless the French are entangled and at war among themselves, it is quite clear, said Alexander, that we can never think of carrying out our great scheme of invading England.⁴

The King thoroughly concurred in all that was said and done by his faithful governor and general. He had no intention of concluding a peace on any terms whatever, and therefore could name no conditions ; but he quite approved of a

¹ "No es aguardar de ella ninguna virtud, sino fuesse forzada de la pura necesidad." Parma to Philip, 12th April, 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

² "Odiados y aborrecidos de los naturales de Olanda y Zelanda." (Parma to Philip, MS. last cited.)

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³ "Se podría jactar de haber nos burlado." (Ibid.)

⁴ "Sin quedar embarazados los franceses entre sí es claro que no se podría pensar a la efectuación del negocio." Parma to Philip, 12 April, 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

continuance of the negotiations. The English, he was convinced, were utterly false on their part, and the King of Denmark's proposition to mediate was part and parcel of the same general fiction. He was quite sensible of the necessity of giving Mucio the money to prevent a pacification in France, and would send letters of exchange on Agostino Spinola for the 300,000 ducats. Meantime Farnese was to go on steadily with his preparations for the invasion.¹

The secretary-of-state, Don Juan de Idiaquez, also wrote most earnestly on the great subject to the Duke. "It is not to be exaggerated," he said, "how set his Majesty is in the all-important business. If you wish to manifest towards him the most flattering obedience on earth, and to oblige him as much as you could wish, give him this great satisfaction *this year*. Since you have money, prepare everything out there, conquer all difficulties, and do the deed so soon as the forces of Spain and Italy arrive, according to the plan laid down by your Excellency last year. *Make use of the negotiations for peace for this one purpose, and no more*, and do the business like the man you are. Attribute the liberty of this advice to my desire to serve you more than any other, to my knowledge of how much you will thereby gratify his Majesty, and to my fear of his resentment towards you, in the contrary case."²

And, on the same day, in order that there might be no doubt of the royal sentiments, Philip expressed himself at length on the whole subject. The dealings of Farnese with the English, and his feeding them with hopes of peace, would have given him more satisfaction, he observed, if it had caused their preparations to slacken; but, on the contrary, their

¹ Philip to Parma, 15 April, 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

² "No se puede encarecer quan puesto está su Mag^d en el negocio principal (the invasion of England). Si V^{ra} Ex^{ca} le quiere hazer la mayor lisonja de la tierra, y obligarla a quanto quisiere, dé le este contentam^{to} este año, y pues tiene dinero prepare todo lo de allá, y venca las dificultades y haga el efeto que a tiempo llegará lo

de España y Italia, para el q V^{ra} Ex^{ca} dezia el año pasado, y sirva se de los tratos de paz para este mismo fin, no mas, y haga esto hecho tan de quien es, y atribuya V^{ra} Ex^{ca} la libertad desto aviso a lo q deseo servirle mas que nadie, y a lo que veo que obligará a su Mag^d con ello, y lo que temo que sentiria lo contrario." Don Juan de Idiaquez to Parma, 13 May, 1587 (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

boldness had increased. They had perpetrated the inhuman murder of the Queen of Scots, and moreover, not content with their piracies at sea and in the Indies, they had dared to invade the ports of Spain, as would appear in the narrative transmitted to Farnese of the late events at Cadiz. *And although that damage was small*, said Philip, there resulted a very great obligation to take them seriously in hand.¹ He *declined sending full powers* for treating; but in order to make use of the same arts employed by the English, he preferred that Alexander should not undeceive them, but desired him to express, as out of his own head, to the negotiators, his astonishment that while they were holding such language they should commit such actions. Even their want of prudence in thus provoking the King, when their strength was compared to his, should be spoken of by Farnese as wonderful, and he was to express the opinion that his Majesty would think him much wanting in circumspection, should he go on negotiating while they were playing such tricks. "You must show yourself very sensitive about this event," continued Philip, "and you must give them to understand that I am quite as angry as you. You must try to draw from them some offer of satisfaction—however false it will be in reality—such as a proposal to recall the fleet, or an assertion that the deeds of Drake in Cadiz were without the knowledge and contrary to the will of the Queen, and that she very much regrets them, or something of that sort."²

It has already been shown that Farnese was very successful in eliciting from the Queen, through the mouth of Lord Burghley, as ample a disavowal and repudiation of Sir Francis Drake as the King could possibly desire. Whether it would have the desired effect of allaying the wrath of Philip, might have been better foretold, could the letter, with which we are

¹ "Y aunque el dafio fue poco es ya mucha la obligacion de yr les muy de veras a la mano." Philip to Parma, 13 May, 1587. (Arch. de Simancas,

MS.)

² Philip to Parma, 13 May, 1587 (MS. last cited.)

now occupied, have been laid upon the Greenwich council-board.

"When you have got such a disavowal," continued his Majesty, "you are to act as if entirely taken in and imposed upon by them, and, pretending to believe everything they tell you, you must renew the negotiations, proceed to name commissioners, and propose a meeting upon neutral territory.¹ As for powers, say that you, as my governor-general, will entrust them to your deputies, in regard to the Netherlands. For all other matters, say that you have had full powers for many months, but that you cannot exhibit them until conditions worthy of my acceptance have been offered. Say this only for the sake of appearance.² This is the true way to take them in, and so the peace-commissioners may meet. But to you only do I declare that my *intention is that this shall never lead to any result, whatever conditions may be offered by them*. On the contrary, all this is done—just as they do—to deceive them, and to cool them in their preparations for defence, by inducing them to believe that such preparations will be unnecessary.³ *You are well aware that the reverse of all this is the truth*, and that on our part there is to be no slackness, but the greatest diligence in our efforts for the invasion of England, for which we have already made the most abundant provision in men, ships, and money, of which you are well aware."⁴

Is it strange that the Queen of England was deceived? Is it matter of surprise, censure, or shame, that no English statesman was astute enough or base enough to contend with such diplomacy, which seemed inspired only by the very father of lies?

"Although we thus enter into negotiations," continued the King—unveiling himself, with a solemn indecency, not agree-

¹ "Y entonces hazer vos del engañado y que creyendo lo que os diren de nuevo volváys a la plática," &c. MS. last cited.

² "Que es camino disimulado." (Ibid.)

³ "Pero con vos solo me aclaro que

miá intencion no es de que aquello llegué a effeto con ningunas condiciones, sino que todo esto se tome por medio, como lo hazen ellos, de entre tenerlos y enfriarlos," &c. (Ibid.)

⁴ Ibid.

able to contemplate—"without any intention of concluding them, you can always get out of them with great honour, by taking umbrage about the point of religion and about some other of the outrageous propositions which they are like to propose, and of which there are plenty in the letters of Andrew de Loo.¹ Your commissioners must be instructed to refer all important matters to your personal decision. The English will be asking for damages for money spent in assisting my rebels; your commissioners will contend that damages are rather due to me. Thus, and in other ways, time will be spent. Your own envoys are not to know the secret any more than the English themselves. I tell it to you only. Thus you will proceed with the negotiations, now yielding on one point, and now insisting on another, but directing all to the same object—to gain time while proceeding with the preparation for the invasion, according to the plan already agreed upon."²

Certainly the most Catholic King seemed, in this remarkable letter to have outdone himself; and Farnese—that sincere Farnese, in whose loyal, truth-telling, chivalrous character, the Queen and her counsellors placed such implicit reliance—could thenceforward no longer be embarrassed as to the course he was to adopt. To lie daily, through thick and thin, and with every variety of circumstance and detail which a genius fertile in fiction could suggest, such was the simple rule prescribed by his sovereign. And the rule was implicitly obeyed, and the English sovereign thoroughly deceived. The secret confided only to the faithful breast of Alexander was religiously kept. Even the Pope was outwitted. His Holiness proposed to Philip the invasion of England, and offered a million to further the plan. He was most desirous to be informed if the project was resolved upon, and, if so, when it was to be accom-

¹ "Con mucha honra, desconcertandovos sobre el punto de la religion o otro de los desaforados, que ellos han de proponer, que harto lo son los del papel de Andrea de Loo." (MS. last cited.)

² "Podreys yr afloxando en unos puntos, y afirmando en otros, todo enderezado al mismo fin por ganar tiempo, preparando todo con diligencia segun la traza concebida" &c. (Ibid.)

plished. The King took the Pope's million, but refused the desired information. He answered evasively. He had a very good will to invade the country, he said, but there were great difficulties in the way.¹ After a time, the Pope again tried to pry into the matter,² and again offered the million which Philip had only accepted for the time when it might be wanted, giving him at the same time, to understand that it was not necessary at that time, because there were then great impediments. "Thus he is pledged to give me the subsidy, and I am not pledged for the time," said Philip, "and I keep my secret, which is the most important of all."³

Yet after all, Farnese did not see his way clear towards the consummation of the plan. His army had wofully dwindled, and before he could seriously set about ulterior matters, it would be necessary to take the city of Sluys. This was to prove—as already seen—a most arduous enterprise. He complained to Philip⁴ of his inadequate supplies both in men and money. The project conceived in the royal breast was worth spending millions for, he said, and although by zeal and devotion he could accomplish something, yet after all he was no more than a man, and without the necessary means the scheme could not succeed.⁵ But Philip, on the contrary, was in the highest possible spirits. He had collected more money, he declared, than had ever been seen before in the world.⁶ He had two million ducats in reserve, besides the Pope's million, the French were in a most excellent state of division, and the invasion should be made this year without fail. The fleet would arrive in the English channel by the end of the summer, which would be exactly in conformity with Alexander's ideas. The invasion was to be threefold: from Scotland, under the

¹ Philip to Parma, 5 June, 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

² "Se ha venido de rodear." (Ibid.)

³ "Por tenerlo prendado en la ayuda, y de no prendarme yo en lo tiempo, y mas por el secreto que es la cosa principal." (Ibid.)

⁴ Parma to Philip, 31 May, 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ He had sent, he said, besides the regular remittances, 700,000 ducats, and there were then coming 2,300,000 ducats additional—300,000 of which were for Mucio, in case of rupture with the French King. Otherwise not a penny was to be diverted from the great cause. Philip to Farnese, 5 June, 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

Scotch earls and their followers, with the money and troops furnished by Philip; from the Netherlands, under Parma; and by the great Spanish armada itself, upon the Isle of Wight. Alexander must recommend himself to God, in whose cause he was acting, and then do his duty, which lay very plain before him. If he ever wished to give his sovereign satisfaction in his life, he was to do the deed that year, whatever might betide.¹ Never could there be so fortunate a conjunction of circumstances again. France was in a state of revolution, the German levies were weak, the Turk was fully occupied in Persia, an enormous mass of money, over and above the Pope's million, had been got together, and although the season was somewhat advanced, it was certain that the Duke would conquer all impediments, and be the instrument by which his royal master might render to God that service which he was so anxious to perform. Enthusiastic, though gouty, Philip grasped the pen in order to scrawl a few words with his own royal hand. "This business is of such importance," he said, "and it is so necessary that it should not be delayed, that I cannot refrain from urging it upon you as much as I can. I should do it even more amply, if this hand would allow me, which has been crippled with gout these several days, and my feet as well, and although it is unattended with pain, yet it is an impediment to writing."²

Struggling thus against his own difficulties, and triumphantly accomplishing a whole paragraph with disabled hand, it was natural that the King should expect Alexander, then deep in the siege of Sluys, to vanquish all his obstacles as successfully, and to effect the conquest of England so soon as the harvests of that kingdom should be garnered.

Sluys was surrendered at last, and the great enterprise seemed ripening from hour to hour. During the months of autumn, upon the very days when those loving messages, mixed with gentle reproaches, were sent by Alexander to Elizabeth, and

¹ Philip to Parma, 5 June, 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

² "Importa tanto esse negocio, y que no se dilate, que no puedo dexar de encargarsele todo quanto puedo y

hiziera lo aun mas largamente si me diera lugar esta mano que he tenido con la gota estos dias y los pies, y aunque esta ya sin dolor, esta impedida para esto." (Ibid.)

almost at the self-same hours in which honest Andrew de Loo was getting such head-aches by drinking the Queen's health with Cosimo and Champagny, the Duke and Philip were interchanging detailed information as to the progress of the invasion. The King calculated that by the middle of September Alexander would have 30,000 men in the Netherlands ready for embarkation. Marquis Santa Cruz was announced as nearly ready to sail for the English channel with 22,000 more, among whom were to be 16,000 seasoned Spanish infantry. The Marquis was then to extend the hand to Parma, and protect that passage to England which the Duke was at once to effect. The danger might be great for so large a fleet to navigate the seas at so late a season of the year; but Philip was sure that God, whose cause it was, would be pleased to give good weather.¹ The Duke was to send, with infinite precautions of secrecy, information which the Marquis would expect off Ushant, and be quite ready to act so soon as Santa Cruz should arrive. Most earnestly and anxiously did the King deprecate any thought of deferring the expedition to another year. If delayed, the obstacles of the following summer—a peace in France, a peace between the Turk and Persia, and other contingencies—would cause the whole project to fail, and Philip declared, with much iteration, that money, reputation, honour, his own character and that of Farnese, and God's service, were all at stake.² He was impatient at suggestions of difficulties occasionally ventured by the Duke, who was reminded that he had been appointed chief of the great enterprise by the spontaneous choice of his master, and that all his plans had been minutely followed. "You are the author of the whole scheme," said Philip, "and if it is all to vanish into space, what kind of a figure shall we cut the coming year?"³ Again and again he referred to the immense sum collected—such as never before had been seen since the world

¹ "Aunque no dexa de ver lo que se aventura en navegar con gruesa armada in invierno, y por esse canal, sin tener puerto cierto; y el tiempo plazera a Dios cuya es la causa darle bueno." Philip to Parma, 4 Sept. 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

² Ibid.

³ "De que vos solo seys autor. Veed si hubiese de caer todo en vacio, quel es que quedaríamos el año que viene," &c. Philip to Parma, 14 Sept. 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

was made—4,800,000 ducats with 2,000,000 in reserve, of which he was authorized to draw for 500,000 in advance, to say nothing of the Pope's million.¹

But Alexander, while straining every nerve to obey his master's wishes about the invasion, and to blind the English by the fictitious negotiations, was not so sanguine as his sovereign. In truth, there was something puerile in the eagerness which Philip manifested. He had made up his mind that England was to be conquered that autumn, and had endeavoured—as well as he could—to comprehend the plans which his illustrious general had laid down for accomplishing that purpose. Of course, to any man of average intellect, or, in truth, to any man outside a madhouse, it would seem an essential part of the conquest that the Armada should arrive. Yet—wonderful to relate—Philip, in his impatience, absolutely suggested that the Duke might take possession of England *without waiting for Santa Cruz and his Armada*. As the autumn had been wearing away, and there had been unavoidable delays about the shipping in Spanish ports, the King thought it best not to defer matters till the winter. "You are, doubtless, ready," he said to Farnese. "If you think you can make the passage to England before the fleet from Spain arrives, go at once. You may be sure that it will come ere long to support you. But if you prefer to wait, wait. The dangers of winter to the fleet and to your own person are to be regretted, but God, whose cause it is, will protect you."²

It was easy to sit quite out of harm's way, and to make such excellent arrangements for smooth weather in the wintry channel, and for the conquest of a maritime and martial kingdom by a few flat bottoms. Philip had little difficulty on that score, but the affairs of France were not quite to his mind. The battle of Coutras, and the entrance of the German and Swiss mercenaries into that country, were somewhat perplexing. Either those auxiliaries of the Huguenots would be

¹ Philip to Parma, MS. last cited.

² Philip to Parma, 4 Nov. 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

defeated, or they would be victorious, or both parties would come to an agreement. In the first event, the Duke, after sending a little assistance to Mucio, was to effect his passage to England *at once*. In the second case, those troops, even though successful, would doubtless be so much disorganized that it might be still safe for Farnese to go on. In the third contingency—that of an accord—it would be necessary for him to wait till the foreign troops had disbanded and left France. He was to maintain all his forces in perfect readiness, on pretext of the threatening aspect of French matters, and, so soon as the Swiss and Germans were dispersed, he was to proceed to business without delay.¹ The fleet would be ready in Spain in all November, but as sea-affairs were so doubtful, particularly in winter, and as the Armada could not reach the channel till mid-winter, the *Duke was not to wait for its arrival*. “Whenever you see a favourable opportunity,” said Philip, “you must take care not to lose it, even if the fleet has not made its appearance. For you may be sure that it will soon come to give you assistance, in one way or another.”²

Farnese had also been strictly enjoined to deal gently with the English, after the conquest, so that they would have cause to love their new master. His troops were not to forget discipline after victory. There was to be no pillage or rapine. The Catholics were to be handsomely rewarded, and all the inhabitants were to be treated with so much indulgence that, instead of abhorring Parma and his soldiers, they would conceive a strong affection for them all, as the source of so many benefits.³ Again the Duke was warmly commended for the skill with which he had handled the peace-negotiation. It was quite right to appoint commissioners, but it was never for an instant to be forgotten that the sole object of treating was to take the English unawares. “And therefore do you guide

¹ Philip to Parma, 14 Nov. 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

² “Viendo buena ocasion procurays de no perderla, aunque no aya llegado la armada—siendo cierto que luego

llegará a hazer espaldas y ayudaros de una mano o otra.” (Ibid.)

³ Philip to Parma, 25 Oct. 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

them to this end," said the King with pious unction, "which is what you owe to God, in whose service I have engaged in this enterprise, and to whom I have dedicated the whole."¹ The King of France, too—that unfortunate Henry III., against whose throne and life Philip maintained in constant pay an organized band of conspirators—was affectionately adjured, through the Spanish envoy in Paris, Mendoza, to reflect upon the advantages to France of a Catholic king and kingdom of England, in place of the heretics now in power."²

But Philip, growing more and more sanguine, as those visions of fresh crowns and conquered kingdoms rose before him in his solitary cell, had even persuaded himself that the deed was already done. In the early days of December, he expressed a doubt whether his 14th November letter had reached the Duke, who *by that time was probably in England.*³ One would have thought the King addressing a tourist just starting on a little pleasure-excursion. And this was precisely the moment when Alexander had been writing those affectionate phrases to the Queen which had been considered by the counsellors at Greenwich so "princely and Christianly," and which Croft had pronounced such "very good words."

If there had been no hostile fleet to prevent, it was to be hoped, said Philip, that, in the name of God, the passage had been made. "Once landed there," continued the King, "I am persuaded that you will give me a good account of yourself, and, with the help of our Lord, that you will do that service which I desire to render to Him, and that He will guide our cause, which is His own, and of such great importance to His Church."⁴ A part of the fleet would soon after arrive and bring six thousand Spaniards, the Pope's million, and other good things, which might prove useful to Parma,

¹ "Por tomarlos desapercibidos. Así lo guíad a esta fin que es el que deve a Dios, por cuyo servicio hago lo principal, y se lo ofresco." (Philip to Parma, last cited.)

² Philip to Don Bernardino de Mendoza, 4 Nov. 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

³ Philip to Parma, 11 Dec. 1587.

(Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

⁴ "Y aviendo pasado estoy muy persuadido de vos que con ayuda de Nro Señor me dareys la buena cuenta que dezio que sareys cierto de hazerle el servicio que yo en esto pretendo—el io guía como causa suya y tan importante a su yglesia." (Ibid.)

presupposing that they would find him established on the enemy's territory.¹

This conviction that the enterprise had been already accomplished grew stronger in the King's breast every day. He was only a little disturbed lest Farnese should have misunderstood that 14th November letter. Philip—as his wont was—had gone into so many petty and puzzling details, and had laid down rules of action suitable for various contingencies, so easy to put comfortably upon paper, but which might become perplexing in action, that it was no wonder he should be a little anxious. The third contingency suggested by him had really occurred. There had been a composition between the foreign mercenaries and the French King. Nevertheless they had also been once or twice defeated, and this was contingency number two. Now which of the events would the Duke consider as having really occurred. It was to be hoped that he would have not seen cause for delay, for in truth number three was not exactly the contingency which existed. France was still in a very satisfactory state of discord and rebellion. The civil war was by no means over. There was small fear of peace that winter. Give Mucio his pittance with frugal hand, and that dangerous personage would ensure tranquillity for Philip's project, and misery for Henry III. and his subjects for an indefinite period longer. The King thought it improbable that Farnese could have made any mistake.² He expressed therefore a little anxiety at having received no intelligence from him, but great confidence that, with the aid of the Lord and of his own courage he *had accomplished the great exploit*. Philip had only recommended delay in event of a general peace in France—Huguenots, Royalists, Leaguers, and all. This had not happened. "Therefore, I trust," said the King, "that you—perceiving that this is not contingency number three which was to justify a pause—will have already executed the enterprise, and fulfilled my desire. I am confident that

¹ Philip to Parma, MS. last cited.

² Same to same, 24 Dec. 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

the deed is done, and that God has blessed it, and I am now expecting the news from hour to hour."¹

But Alexander had not yet arrived in England. The preliminaries for the conquest caused him more perplexity than the whole enterprise occasioned to Philip. He was very short of funds. The five millions were not to be touched, except for the expenses of the invasion. But as England was to be subjugated, in order that rebellious Holland might be recovered, it was hardly reasonable to go away leaving such inadequate forces in the Netherlands as to ensure not only independence to the new republic, but to hold out temptation for revolt to the obedient Provinces. Yet this was the dilemma in which the Duke was placed. So much money had been set aside for the grand project that there was scarcely anything for the regular military business. The customary supplies had not been sent. Parma had leave to draw for six hundred thousand ducats, and he was able to get that draft discounted on the Antwerp Exchange by consenting to receive five hundred thousand, or sacrificing sixteen per cent. of the sum.² A good number of transports and scows had been collected, but there had been a deficiency of money for their proper equipment, as the five millions had been very slow in coming, and were still upon the road. The whole enterprise was on the point of being sacrificed, according to Farnese, for want of funds. The time for doing the deed had arrived, and he declared himself incapacitated by poverty. He expressed his disgust and resentment in language more energetic than courtly, and protested that he was not to blame. "I always thought," said he bitterly, "that your Majesty would provide all that was necessary even in superfluity, and not limit me beneath the ordinary. I did not suppose, when it was most important to have ready money, that I should be kept short, and not allowed to draw certain

¹ "Y así creo, que conociendo que no es este el caso tercero, en que aviades de parar, avreys executado la empresa, y cumplido mio deseo . . .

de que quedo aguardando el aviso de ora en ora." (Ibid.)

² Parma to Philip, 18 Sept. 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

sums by anticipation, which I should have done had you not forbidden."¹

This was, through life, a striking characteristic of Philip. Enormous schemes were laid out with utterly inadequate provision for their accomplishment, and a confident expectation entertained that wild visions were, in some indefinite way, to be converted into substantial realities, without fatigue or personal exertion on his part, and with a very trifling outlay of ready money.

Meantime the faithful Farnese did his best. He was indefatigable night and day in getting his boats together and providing his munitions of war. He dug a canal from Sas de Gand—which was one of his principal dépôts—all the way to Sluys, because the water-communication between those two points was entirely in the hands of the Hollanders and Zealanders. The rebel cruisers swarmed in the Scheldt, from Flushing almost to Antwerp, so that it was quite impossible for Parma's forces to venture forth at all; and it also seemed hopeless to hazard putting to sea from Sluys.² At the same time he had appointed his commissioners³ to treat with the English envoys already named by the Queen. There had been much delay in the arrival of those deputies, on account of the noise raised by Barneveld and his followers; but Burghley was now sanguine that the exposure of what he called the Advocate's seditious, false, and perverse proceedings, would enable Leicester to procure the consent of the States to a universal peace.

And thus, with these parallel schemes of invasion and negotiation, spring, summer, and autumn, had worn away. Santa Cruz was still with his fleet in Lisbon, Cadiz, and the Azores; and Parma was in Brussels, when Philip fondly ima-

¹ Parma to Philip, MS. last cited.

² Parma to Philip, 21 Dec. 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.) "Pues de razon Olandeses y Zelandeses solos estan siempre a la mira y asi como tienen medio de estorbarnos la junta y salida de nuestros baxeles lo ternan

cada dia mayor para hazer lo mismo en el pasage."

³ Aremborg, Champagny, Richardet, Maas, Garnier. Parma to Philip, 18 Sept. 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

gined him established in Greenwich Palace. When made aware of his master's preposterous expectations, Alexander would have been perhaps amused, had he not been half beside himself with indignation. Such folly seemed incredible. There was not the slightest appearance of a possibility of making a passage without the protection of the Spanish fleet, he observed. His vessels were mere transport-boats, without the least power of resisting an enemy. The Hollanders and Zeelanders, with one hundred and forty cruisers, had shut him up in all directions. He could neither get out from Antwerp nor from Sluys. There were large English ships, too, cruising in the channel, and they were getting ready in the Netherlands and in England "most furiously."¹ The delays had been so great, that their secret had been poorly kept, and the enemy was on his guard. If Santa Cruz had come, Alexander declared that he should have already been in England. When he did come he should still be prepared to make the passage; but to talk of such an attempt without the Armada was senseless, and he denounced the madness of that proposition to his Majesty in vehement and unmeasured terms.² His army, by sickness and other causes, had been reduced to one-half the number considered necessary for the invasion, and the rebels had established regular squadrons in the Scheldt, in the very teeth of the forts at Lillo, Liefkenshoek, Saftingen, and other points close to Antwerp. There were so many of these war-vessels, and all in such excellent order, that they were a most notable embarrassment to him, he observed, and his own flotilla would run great risk of being utterly destroyed. Alexander had been personally superintending matters at Sluys, Ghent, and Antwerp, and had strengthened with artillery the canal which he had constructed between Sas and Sluys. Meantime his fresh troops had been slowly arriving, but much sickness prevailed among them. The Italians were dying fast, almost all the Spaniards were in hospital, and the others were so crippled and worn out that it was most pitiable to behold them; yet it was abso-

¹ Parma to Philip, 21 Dec., 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

² Ibid.

lutely necessary that those who were in health should accompany him to England,¹ since otherwise his Spanish force would be altogether too weak to do the service expected. He had got together a good number of transports. Not counting his Antwerp fleet—which could not stir from port, as he bitterly complained, nor be of any use, on account of the rebel blockade—he had between Dunkerk and Newport seventy-four vessels of various kinds fit for sea-service, one hundred and fifty flat-bottoms (*pleytas*), and seventy river-hoys, all which were to be assembled at Sluys, whence they would—so soon as Santa Cruz should make his appearance—set forth for England.² This force of transports he pronounced sufficient, when properly protected by the Spanish Armada, to carry himself and his troops across the channel. If, therefore, the matter did not become publicly known, and if the weather proved favourable, it was probable that his Majesty's desire would soon be fulfilled according to the plan proposed. The companies of light horse and of arquebusmen, with which he meant to make his entrance into London, had been clothed, armed, and mounted, he said, in a manner delightful to contemplate, and those soldiers at least might be trusted—if they could only effect their passage—to do good service, and make matters quite secure.³

But craftily as the King and Duke had been dealing, it had been found impossible to keep such vast preparations entirely secret. Walsingham was in full possession of their plans down to the most minute details. The misfortune was that he was unable to persuade his sovereign, Lord Burghley, and others of the peace-party, as to the accuracy of his information. Not only was he thoroughly instructed in regard to the number of men, vessels, horses, mules, saddles, spurs, lances, barrels of beer and tons of biscuit, and other particulars of the contemplated invasion, but he had even received

¹ Parma to Philip, Dec. 21, 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

² Ibid. (MS. last cited.)

³ "Se han vestido, armado, y enca- balgado, que es placer de verlas, y la

soldadesca de ellas es tal que, si pueden pasar, haran a V. M. buen serviz y aseguraran mucho el serviz." MS. Letter last cited.

curious intelligence as to the gorgeous equipment of those very troops, with which the Duke was just secretly announcing to the King his intention of making his triumphal entrance into the English capital. Sir Francis knew how many thousand yards of cramoisy velvet, how many hundred-weight of gold and silver embroidery, how much satin and feathers, and what quantity of pearls and diamonds, Farnese had been providing himself withal. He knew the tailors, jewellers, silversmiths, and haberdashers, with whom the great Alexander—as he now began to be called—had been dealing; but when he spoke at the council-board, it was to

¹ "There is provided for lights a great number of torches, and so tempered that no water can put them out. A great number of little mills for grinding corn, great store of biscuit baked and oxen salted, great number of saddles and boots, also there is made 500 pair of velvet shoes—red, crimson velvet, and in every cloister throughout the country great quantity of roses made of silk, white and red, which are to be badges for divers of his gentlemen. By reason of these roses it is expected he is going for England. There is sold to the Prince by John Angel, pergaman, ten hundred-weight of velvet, gold and silver to embroider his apparel withal. The covering to his mules is most gorgeously embroidered with gold and silver, which carry his baggage. There is also sold to him by the Italian merchants at least 670 pieces of velvet to apparel him and his train. Every captain has received a gift from the Prince to make himself brave, and for Captain Corralini, an Italian, who hath one cornet of horse, I have seen with my eyes a saddle with the trappings of his horse, his *coat and rapier and dagger, which cost 3,500 French crowns.* (11) All their lances are painted of divers colours, blue and white, green and white, and most part blood-red—so there is as great preparation for a triumph as for war. A great number of English priests come to Antwerp from all places. The commandment is given to all the churches to read the Litany daily for the prosperity of the Prince in his enterprise." John

Giles to Walsingham, 4 Dec. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

The same letter conveyed also very detailed information concerning the naval preparations by the Duke, besides accurate intelligence in regard to the progress of the armada in Cadiz and Lisbon.

Sir William Russel wrote also from Flushing concerning these preparations in much the same strain; but it is worthy of note that he considered Farnese to be rather intending a movement against France.

"The Prince of Parma," he said, "is making great preparations for war, and with all expedition means to march a great army, and for a triumph, the coats and costly apparel for his own body doth exceed for embroidery, and beset with jewels; for all the *embroiderers and diamond-cutters work both night and day*, such haste is made. Five hundred velvet coats of one sort for lances, and a great number of brave new coats made for horsemen; 30,000 men are ready, and gather in Brabant and Flanders. It is said that there shall be in two days 10,000 to do some great exploit in these parts, and 20,000 to march with the Prince into France, and for certain it is not known what way or how they shall march, but all are ready at an hour's warning—4,000 saddles, 4,000 lances, 6,000 pairs of boots, 2,000 barrels of beer, biscuit sufficient for a camp of 20,000 men, &c. The Prince hath received a marvellous costly garland or crown from the Pope, and is chosen chief of the holy league, and now puts in his

ears wilfully deaf. Nor was much concealed from the Argus-eyed politicians in the republic. The States were more and more intractable. They knew nearly all the truth with regard to the intercourse between the Queen's government and Farnese, and they suspected more than the truth. The list of English commissioners privately agreed upon between Burghley and De Loo was known to Barneveld, Maurice, and Hohenlo, before it came to the ears of Leicester. In June, Buckhurst had been censured by Elizabeth for opening the peace matter to members of the States, according to her bidding, and in July Leicester was rebuked for exactly the opposite delinquency. She was very angry that he had delayed the communication of her policy so long, but she expressed her anger only when that policy had proved so transparent as to make concealment hopeless. Leicester, as well as Buckhurst, knew that it was idle to talk to the Netherlanders of peace, because of their profound distrust in every word that came from Spanish or Italian lips; but Leicester, less frank than Buckhurst, preferred to flatter his sovereign, rather than to tell her unwelcome truths. More fortunate than Buckhurst, he was rewarded for his flattery by boundless affection, and promotion to the very highest post in England when the hour of England's greatest peril had arrived, while the truth-telling counsellor was consigned to imprisonment and disgrace. When the Queen complained sharply that the States were mocking her, and that she was touched in honour at the prospect of not keeping her plighted word to Farnese, the Earl assured her that the Netherlanders were fast changing their views; that although the very name of peace had till then been odious and loathsome,¹ yet now, as coming from her Majesty, they would accept it with thankful hearts.

arms two cross keys. The King of France hath written for the Prince with expedition, and 'tis said he marches thither, and on the way will besiege Cambray," &c. Occurrences, from the Governor of Flushing, Nov. 9, 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

Thus Sir William seems to have been less accurately acquainted with

the movements of Farnese than was John Giles, and the mysterious precautions of the King and his general had been far from fruitless.

¹ Leicester to the Queen, 9 Oct. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Same to same, 1 Oct. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

The States, or the leading members of that assembly, factious fellows, pestilent and seditious knaves,¹ were doing their utmost, and were singing sirens' songs² to enchant and delude the people, but they were fast losing their influence—so warmly did the country desire to conform to her Majesty's pleasure. He expatiated, however, upon the difficulties in his path. The knowledge possessed by the pestilent fellows as to the actual position of affairs, was very mischievous. It was honey to Maurice and Hohenlo,³ he said, that the Queen's secret practices with Farnese had thus been discovered. Nothing could be more marked than the jollity with which the ringleaders hailed these preparations for peace-making,⁴ for they now felt certain that the government of their country had been fixed securely in their own hands. They were canonized, said the Earl, for their hostility to peace.⁵

Should not this conviction, on the part of men who had so many means of feeling the popular pulse, have given the Queen's government pause? To serve his sovereign in truth, Leicester might have admitted a possibility at least of honesty on the part of men who were so ready to offer up their lives for their country. For in a very few weeks he was obliged to confess that the people were no longer so well disposed to acquiesce in her Majesty's policy. The great majority, both of the States and the people, were in favour, he agreed, of continuing the war. The inhabitants of the little Province of Holland alone, he said, had avowed their determination to maintain their rights—even if obliged to fight single-handed—and to shed the last drop in their veins, rather than to submit again to Spanish tyranny.⁶ This seemed a heroic resolution, worthy the sympathy of a brave Englishman, but the Earl's only comment upon it was, that it proved the ringleaders “either to be traitors or else *the most blindest asses in the*

¹ Same to same, 5 Nov. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Same to Burghley, 30 Oct. 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, D. II. p. 57. MS.)

³ Leicester to Burghley, 17 Aug. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Same to same, 30 Oct. 1587. (Brit.

Mus. Galba, D. II. p. 57. MS.)

⁵ Leicester to Walsingham, 9 Oct. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁶ Leicester to Burghley, 30 Oct. 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, D. II. p. 57. MS.)

Same to the Queen, 11 Oct. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

world."¹ He never scrupled, on repeated occasions, to insinuate that Barneveld, Hohenlo, Buys, Roorda, Sainte Aldegonde, and the Nassaus, had organized a plot to sell their country to Spain.² Of this there was not the faintest evidence, but it was the only way in which he chose to account for their persistent opposition to the peace-negotiations, and to their reluctance to confer absolute power on himself. "'Tis a crabbed, sullen, proud kind of people," said he, "and bent on establishing a popular government,"³—a purpose which seemed somewhat inconsistent with the plot for selling their country to Spain, which he charged in the same breath on the same persons.

Early in August, by the Queen's command, he had sent a formal communication respecting the private negotiations to the States, but he could tell them no secret. The names of the commissioners, and even the supposed articles of a treaty already concluded, were flying from town to town, from mouth to mouth, so that the Earl pronounced it impossible for one, not on the spot, to imagine the excitement which existed.

He had sent a state-counsellor, one Bardesius, to the Hague, to open the matter; but that personage had only ventured to whisper a word to one or two members of the States, and was assured that the proposition, if made, would raise such a tumult of fury, that he might fear for his life. So poor Bardesius came back to Leicester, fell on his knees, and implored him, at least to pause in these fatal proceedings.⁴ After an interval, he sent two eminent statesmen, Valk and Menin, to lay the subject before the assembly. They did so, and it was met by fierce denunciation. On their return, the Earl, finding that so much violence had been excited, pretended that they had misunderstood his meaning, and that he had never meant to propose peace-negotiations. But Valk and Menin were too

¹ Leicester to the Queen, 17 Nov. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Leicester to the Queen, 5 Nov. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.) Same to Burghley, 6 Nov. 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, D. II. p. 176. MS.)

³ Same to same, 11 Oct. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Leicester to Burghley, 30 Sept. 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, D. II. p. 34. MS.)

old politicians to be caught in such a trap, and they produced a brief, drawn up in Italian—the foreign language best understood by the Earl—with his own corrections and interlineations, so that he was forced to admit that there had been no misconception.¹

Leicester at last could no longer doubt that he was universally odious in the Provinces. Hohenlo, Barneveld, and the rest, who had “championed the country against the peace,” were carrying all before them. They had persuaded the people, that the “Queen was but a tickle stay for them,” and had inflated young Maurice with vast ideas of his importance, telling him that he was “a natural patriot, the image of his noble father, whose memory was yet great among them, as good reason, dying in their cause, as he had done.”² The country was bent on a popular government, and on maintaining the war. There was no possibility, he confessed, that they would ever confer the authority on him which they had formerly bestowed.³ The Queen had promised, when he left England the second time, that his absence should be for but three months,⁴ and he now most anxiously claimed permission to depart. Above all things, he deprecated being employed as a peace-commissioner. He was, of all men, the most unfit for such a post. At the same time he implored the statesmen at home to be wary in selecting the wisest persons for that arduous duty, in order that the peace might be made for Queen Elizabeth, as well as for King Philip. He strongly recommended, for that duty, Beale, the councillor, who with Killigrew had replaced the hated Wilkes and the pacific Bartholomew Clerk. “Mr. Beale, brother-in-law to Walsingham, is in my books a prince,” said the Earl. “He

¹ Bor, III. xxiii. 34. Hoofd, ‘Vervolgh,’ 276. Wagenaar, viii. 236. Meteren, xiv. 260. Compare Reynd, vi. 109, who says however that Valk and Menin could produce no written instructions from Leicester, but that the characters of such well-known statesmen carried conviction of the truth of

their statements.

² Leicester to the Lords, 21 Nov. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Leicester to Walsingham, 13 Oct. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Leicester to Burghley, 30 Sept. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

was *drowned* in England, but most useful in the Netherlands. Without him I am naked."¹

And at last the governor told the Queen what Buckhurst and Walsingham had been perpetually telling her, that the Duke of Parma meant mischief; and he sent the same information as to hundreds of boats preparing, with six thousand shirts for camisados, 7000 pairs of wading boots, and saddles, stirrups, and spurs, enough for a choice band of 3000 men.² A shrewd troop, said the Earl, of the first soldiers in Christendom, to be landed some fine morning in England. And he too had heard of the jewelled suits of cramoisy velvet, and all the rest of the finery with which the triumphant Alexander was intending to astonish London. "Get horses enough, and muskets enough in England," exclaimed Leicester, "and then our people will not be beaten, I warrant you, if well led."³

And now, the governor—who, in order to soothe his sovereign and comply with her vehement wishes, had so long misrepresented the state of public feeling—not only confessed that Papists and Protestants, gentle and simple, the States and the people, throughout the republic, were all opposed to any negotiation with the enemy, but lifted up his own voice, and in earnest language expressed his opinion of the Queen's infatuation.

"Oh, my Lord, what a treaty is this for peace," said he to Burghley, "that we must treat, altogether disarmed and weakened, and the King having made his forces stronger than ever he had known in these parts, besides what is coming out of Spain, and yet we will presume of good conditions. It grieveth me to the heart. But I fear you will all smart for it, and I pray God her Majesty feel it not, if it be His blessed will. She meaneth well and sincerely to have peace, but God knows that this is not the way. Well, God Almighty defend

¹ Leicester to Walsingham, 4 Aug. 1587. Same to same, 16 Sept. 1587. (S. P. Office MSS.)

² Leicester to Burghley, 5 Nov. 1587 (S. P. Office MS.)

³ *Ibid.*

us and the realm, and especially her Majesty. But look for a sharp war, or a miserable peace, *to undo others and ourselves after.*"¹

Walsingham, too, was determined not to act as a commissioner. If his failing health did not serve as an excuse, he should be obliged to refuse, he said, and so forfeit her Majesty's favour, rather than be instrumental in bringing about her ruin, and that of his country. Never for an instant had the Secretary of State faltered in his opposition to the timid policy of Burghley. Again and again he had detected the intrigues of the Lord-Treasurer and Sir James Croft, and ridiculed the "comptroller's peace."²

And especially did Walsingham bewail the implicit confidence which the Queen placed in the sugary words of Alexander, and the fatal parsimony which caused her to neglect defending herself against Scotland;³ for he was as well informed as was Farnese himself of Philip's arrangements with the Scotch lords, and of the subsidies in men and money by which their invasion of England was to be made part of the great scheme. "No one thing," sighed Walsingham, "doth more prognosticate an alteration of this estate, than that a prince of her Majesty's judgment should neglect, in

¹ Leicester to Burghley, 7 Nov. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

And to Walsingham he wrote most earnestly in the same vein. "Our enemies have dealt more like politic men than we have," he said, "for it was always agreed heretofore among us that there was no way to make a good peace but by a strong war. . . . Now is the difference put in experience, for we see the Prince of Parma did not weaken himself to trust upon peace, but hath increased his forces in the highest degree, whilst we talked of peace; that if we break off, he might either compel us to his peace or be beforehand with us by the readiness of his forces. *This was told and foretold*, but yet no ear given nor care taken. . . . Surely you shall find the *Prince meaneth no peace*. I see *money doth undo all*—the care to keep it, and not upon just cause to spend it. Her

Majesty doth still blame me for the expense of her treasure here, *which doth make me weary of my life*; but her Majesty *will rue the sparing counsel* at such times.

He then sent information as to Parma's intentions, derived from an intercepted letter of a man in Sir William Stanley's regiment to a priest in England, "bidding his friend be sure they are shortly to be in England." . . . "It were better to her Majesty," added Leicester, "than a million pounds sterling, that she had done as the Duke of Parma hath done." Leicester to Walsingham, 7 Nov. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Walsingham to Leicester, 21 Sept. 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, D. II. p. 78. MS.)

³ Walsingham to Leicester, 12 Nov. 1587. (Brit. Mus. Galba, D. II. p. 178. MS.)

respect of a little charges, the stopping of so dangerous a gap. . . . The manner of our cold and careless proceeding here, in this time of peril, maketh me to take no comfort of my recovery of health, for that I see, unless it shall please God in mercy and miraculously to preserve us, *we cannot long stand.*"¹

Leicester, finding himself unable to counteract the policy of Barneveld and his party, by expostulation or argument, conceived a very dangerous and criminal project before he left the country. The facts are somewhat veiled in mystery; but he was suspected, on weighty evidence, of a design to kidnap both Maurice and Barneveld, and carry them off to England. Of this intention, which was foiled at any rate, before it could be carried into execution, there is perhaps not conclusive proof, but it has already been shown, from a deciphered letter, that the Queen had once given Buckhurst and Wilkes peremptory orders to seize the person of Hohenlo, and it is quite possible that similar orders may have been received at a later moment with regard to the young Count and the Advocate. At any rate, it is certain that late in the autumn, some friends of Barneveld entered his bedroom, at the Hague, in the dead of night, and informed him that a plot was on foot to lay violent hands upon him, and that an armed force was already on its way to execute this purpose of Leicester, before the dawn of day. The Advocate, without loss of time, took his departure for Delft, a step which was followed, shortly afterwards, by Maurice.²

Nor was this the only daring stroke which the Earl had meditated. During the progress of the secret negotiations with Parma, he had not neglected those still more secret schemes to which he had occasionally made allusion. He had deter-

¹ "A letter from the Duke of Parma," says the Secretary, "bred in her Majesty such a dangerous security, as all advertisements of danger are neglected, and great expedition used in despatching of the commissioners. I was fully resolved in no sort to have accepted the charge, had not my sickness prevented, for that I would be loth to be

engaged in a service that all men of judgment may see cannot but work her Majesty's ruin. I pray God I and others of my opinion prove in this false propheta." (Ibid.)

² Bor, III. xxiii. 51. Hoofl, 'Vervolgh,' 287. Wagenaar, viii. 240. Van Wyn op Wagenaar, viii. 68, 69.

mined, if possible, to obtain possession of the most important cities in Holland and Zeeland. It was very plain to him, that he could no longer hope, by fair means, for the great authority once conferred upon him by the free will of the States. It was his purpose, therefore, by force and stratagem to recover his lost power. We have heard the violent terms in which both the Queen and the Earl denounced the men who accused the English government of any such intention. It had been formally denied by the States-General that Barneveld had ever used the language in that assembly with which he had been charged. He had only revealed to them the exact purport of the letter to Junius, and of the Queen's secret instructions to Leicester.¹ Whatever he may have said in private conversation, and whatever deductions he may have made among his intimate friends, from the admitted facts in the case, could hardly be made matters of record. It does not appear that he, or the statesmen who acted with him, considered the Earl capable of a deliberate design to sell the cities, thus to be acquired, to Spain, as the price of peace for England. Certainly Elizabeth would have scorned such a crime, and was justly indignant at rumours prevalent to that effect; but the wrath of the Queen and of her favourite were, perhaps, somewhat simulated, in order to cover their real mortification at the discovery of designs on the part of the Earl which could not be denied. Not only had they been at last compelled to confess these negotiations, which for several months had been concealed and stubbornly denied, but the still graver plots of the Earl to regain his much-coveted authority had been, in a startling manner, revealed. The leaders of the States-General had a right to suspect the English Earl of a design to reenact the part of the Duke of Anjou, and were justified in taking stringent measures to prevent a calamity, which, as they believed, was impending over their little commonwealth. The high-handed dealings of Leicester in the city of Utrecht have been already de-

¹ Resol. Holl. 15, 16, 18 Sept. 1587, bl. 253, 254, 258, cited in Van Wyn, *ubi sup.*

scribed. The most respectable and influential burghers of the place had been imprisoned and banished, the municipal government wrested from the hands to which it legitimately belonged, and confided to adventurers, who wore the cloak of Calvinism to conceal their designs, and a successful effort had been made, in the name of democracy, to eradicate from one ancient province the liberty on which it prided itself.

In the course of the autumn, an attempt was made to play the same game at Amsterdam. A plot was discovered, before it was fairly matured, to seize the magistrates of that important city, to gain possession of the arsenals, and to place the government in the hands of well-known Leicestrians. A list of fourteen influential citizens, drawn up in the writing of Burggrave, the Earl's confidential secretary, was found, all of whom, it was asserted, had been doomed to the scaffold.¹

The plot to secure Amsterdam had failed, but, in North Holland, Medenblik was held firmly for Leicester, by Diedrich Sonoy, in the very teeth of the States.² The important city of Enkhuyzen, too, was very near being secured for the Earl, but a still more significant movement was made at Leyden. That heroic city, ever since the famous siege of 1574, in which the Spaniard had been so signally foiled, had distinguished itself by great liberality of sentiment in religious matters. The burghers were inspired by a love of country, and a hatred of oppression, both civil and ecclesiastical; and Papists and Protestants, who had fought side by side against the common foe, were not disposed to tear each other to pieces, now that he had been excluded from their gates. Meanwhile, however, refugee Flemings and Brabantines had sought an asylum in the city, and being, as usual, of the strictest sect of the

¹ Hoofd, xxvi. 1199, 1200. Wage-naar, viii. 243-246.

Among them was the name of burgomaster Hoofd, father of the illustrious historian of the Netherlands. Much caution should be observed, however, in accepting, to their full extent, charges made in times of such violent party spirit. Leicester would have hardly ventured to hang fourteen

such men as Hoofd and his compeers, although he would willingly have brought Barneveld and Buys to the gibbet. He would have imprisoned and banished, no doubt, as many Amsterdam burghers of the States-party as he could lay hands on.

² Bor, III. xxiii. 7, xxiv. 179-204, 208-233, 278-290. Reyd, vi 101. Wage-naar, 209, 210, 270-278.

Calvinists were shocked at the latitudinarianism which prevailed. To the honour of the city—as it seems to us now—but, to their horror, it was even found that one or two Papists had seats in the magistracy.¹ More than all this, there was a school in the town kept by a Catholic, and Adrian van der Werff himself—the renowned burgomaster, who had sustained the city during the dreadful leaguer of 1574, and who had told the famishing burghers that they might eat him if they liked, but that they should never surrender to the Spaniards while he remained alive—even Adrian van der Werff had sent his son to this very school.² To the clamour made by the refugees against this spirit of toleration, one of the favourite preachers in the town, of Arminian tendencies, had declared in the pulpit, that he would as lieve see the Spanish as the Calvinistic inquisition established over his country; using an expression, in regard to the church of Geneva, more energetic than decorous.³

It was from Leyden that the chief opposition came to a synod, by which a great attempt was to be made towards subjecting the new commonwealth to a masked theocracy; a scheme which the States of Holland had resisted with might and main. The Calvinistic party, waxing stronger in Leyden, although still in a minority, at last resolved upon a strong effort to place the city in the hands of that great representative of Calvinism, the Earl of Leicester. Jacques Volmar, a deacon of the church, Cosmo de Pescarengis, a Genoese captain of much experience in the service of the republic, Adolphus de Meetkerke, former president of Flanders, who had been, by the States, deprived of the seat in the great council to which the Earl had appointed him; Doctor Saravia, professor of theology in the university, with other deacons, preachers, and captains, went at different times from Leyden to Utrecht, and had secret interviews with Leicester.

A plan was at last agreed upon, according to which, about the middle of October, a revolution should be effected in

¹ Bor. xxiii. 98-106.

² Ibid. "Liever de Spaense Inqui-

Ibid. | sitle dan de Geneefse discipline, die
pockige hoere," p. 98.

Leyden. Captain Nicholas de Maulde, who had recently so much distinguished himself in the defence of Sluys, was stationed with two companies of States' troops in the city. He had been much disgusted—not without reason—at the culpable negligence through which the courageous efforts of the Sluys garrison had been set at nought, and the place sacrificed, when it might so easily have been relieved; and he ascribed the whole of the guilt to Maurice, Hohenlo, and the States, although it could hardly be denied that at least an equal portion belonged to Leicester and his party. The young captain listened, therefore, to a scheme propounded to him by Colonel Cosmo and Deacon Volmar, in the name of Leicester. He agreed, on a certain day, to muster his company, to leave the city by the Delft gate—as if by command of superior authority—to effect a junction with Captain Heraugiere, another of the distinguished malcontent defenders of Sluys, who was stationed, with his command, at Delft, and then to re-enter Leyden, take possession of the town-hall, arrest all the magistrates, together with Adrian van der Werff, ex-burgomaster, and proclaim Lord Leicester, in the name of Queen Elizabeth, legitimate master of the city.¹ A list of burghers, who were to be executed, was likewise agreed upon, at a final meeting of the conspirators in a hostelry, which bore the ominous name of 'The Thunderbolt.' A desire had been signified by Leicester, in the preliminary interviews at Utrecht, that all bloodshed, if possible, should be spared,² but it was certainly an extravagant expectation, considering the temper, the political convictions, and the known courage of the Leyden burghers, that the city would submit, without a struggle, to this invasion of all their rights. It could hardly be doubted that the streets would run red with blood, as those of Antwerp had done, when a similar attempt, on the part of Anjou, had been foiled.

Unfortunately for the scheme, a day or two before the great stroke was to be hazarded, Cosmo de Pescarengis had

¹ Bor, *ubi sup.* Reyd, vii. 133, 134. Meteren, xiv. 261.

² Bor, Reyd, Meteren, *ubi sup.*

been accidentally arrested for debt.¹ A subordinate accomplice, taking alarm, had then gone before the magistrate and revealed the plot. Volmar and de Maulde fled at once, but were soon arrested in the neighbourhood. President de Meesterkerke, Professor Saravia, the preacher Van der Wouw, and others most compromised, effected their escape.² The matter was instantly laid before the States of Holland by the magistracy of Leyden, and seemed of the gravest moment. In the beginning of the year, the fatal treason of York and Stanley had implanted a deep suspicion of Leicester in the hearts of almost all the Netherlanders, which could not be eradicated. The painful rumours concerning the secret negotiations with Spain, and the design falsely attributed to the English Queen, of selling the chief cities of the republic to Philip as the price of peace, and of reimbursement for expenses incurred by her, increased the general excitement to fever. It was felt by the leaders of the States that as mortal a combat lay before them with the Earl of Leicester, as with the King of Spain, and that it was necessary to strike a severe blow, in order to vindicate their imperilled authority.

A commission was appointed by the high court of Holland, acting in conjunction with the States of the Provinces, to try the offenders. Among the commissioners were Adrian van der Werff, John van der Does, who had been military commandant of Leyden during the siege, Barneveld, and other distinguished personages, over whom Count Maurice presided.³ The accused were subjected to an impartial trial. Without torture, they confessed their guilt.⁴ It is true, however, that Cosmo was placed within sight of the rack. He avowed that his object had been to place the city under the authority of Leicester, and to effect this purpose, if possible, without bloodshed. He declared that the attempt was to be made with the full knowledge and approbation of the Earl, who had promised him the command of a regiment of twelve companies, as

¹ Bor, Reyd, Meteren, *ubi sup.*

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ So say Bor and Meteren; but

Reyd says that they were put to the torture, p. 153. "Nae pijnlijke ondervraeginge."

a recompense for his services, if they proved successful. Leicester, said Cosmo, had also pledged himself, in case the men, thus executing his plans, should be discovered and endangered, to protect and rescue them, even at the sacrifice of all his fortune, and of the office he held. When asked if he had any written statement from his Excellency to that effect, Cosmo replied, no, nothing but his princely word which he had voluntarily given.¹

Volmar made a similar confession. He, too, declared that he had acted throughout the affair by express command of the Earl of Leicester. Being asked if he had any written evidence of the fact, he, likewise, replied in the negative. "Then his Excellency will unquestionably deny your assertion," said the judges. "Alas, then am I a dead man," replied Volmar, and the unfortunate deacon never spoke truer words. Captain de Maulde also confessed his crime. He did not pretend, however, to have had any personal communication with Leicester, but said that the affair had been confided to him by Colonel Cosmo, on the express authority of the Earl, and that he had believed himself to be acting in obedience to his Excellency's commands.²

On the 26th October, after a thorough investigation, followed by a full confession on the part of the culprits, the three were sentenced to death.³ The decree was surely a most severe one. They had been guilty of no actual crime, and only in case of high treason could an intention to commit a crime be considered, by the laws of the state, an offence punishable with death. But it was exactly because it was important to make the crime high treason that the prisoners were condemned. The offence was considered as a crime not against Leyden, but as an attempt to levy war upon a city

¹ Bor, Meteren, *ubi sup.* Reynders declares that Killigrew (who with Beale, was member of the state-council as representative of the Queen) notified the commissioners that the attempt had been made with the knowledge and consent of Leicester, and warned them not to be precipitate in the trial: but that the

Earl, who was then at Alkmaar, denied all complicity in the affair. Cosmo, according to the same authority, called out, when upon the rack, "Oh, Excellence, a quoi employez vous les gens!" P. 134.

² Bor, Meteren, Reynders, *ubi sup.*

³ *Ibid.* The sentences are given in full by Bor.

which was a member of the States of Holland and of the United States. If the States were sovereign, then this was a lesion of their sovereignty. Moreover, the offence had been aggravated by the employment of United States' troops against the commonwealth of the United States itself. To cut off the heads of these prisoners was a sharp practical answer to the claims of sovereignty by Leicester, as representing the people, and a terrible warning to all who might, in future, be disposed to revive the theories of Deventer and Burgrave.

In the case of De Maulde the punishment seemed especially severe. His fate excited universal sympathy, and great efforts were made to obtain his pardon. He was a universal favourite, he was young; he was very handsome; his manners were attractive; he belonged to an ancient and honourable race. His father, the Seigneur de Mansart, had done great services in the war of independence, had been an intimate friend of the great Prince of Orange, and had even advanced large sums of money to assist his noble efforts to liberate the country. Two brothers of the young captain had fallen in the service of the republic. He, too, had distinguished himself at Ostend, and his gallantry during the recent siege of Sluys had been in every mouth, and had excited the warm applause of so good a judge of soldiership as the veteran Roger Williams. The scars of the wounds received in the desperate conflicts of that siege were fresh upon his breast. He had not intended to commit treason, but, convinced by the sophistry of older soldiers than himself, as well as by learned deacons and theologians, he had imagined himself doing his duty, while obeying the Earl of Leicester. If there were ever a time for mercy, this seemed one, and young Maurice of Nassau might have remembered, that even in the case of the assassins who had attempted the life of his father, that great-hearted man had lifted up his voice—which seemed his dying one—in favour of those who had sought his life.

But the authorities were inexorable. There was no hope of a mitigation of punishment, but a last effort was made, under favour of a singular ancient custom, to save the life of De

Maulde. A young lady of noble family in Leyden—Uytenbroek by name—claimed the right of rescuing the condemned malefactor from the axe, by appearing upon the scaffold, and offering to take him for her husband.¹

Intelligence was brought to the prisoner in his dungeon, that the young lady had made the proposition, and he was told to be of good cheer. But he refused to be comforted. He was slightly acquainted with the gentlewoman, he observed, and doubted much whether her request would be granted. Moreover—if contemporary chronicle can be trusted—he even expressed a preference for the scaffold, as the milder fate of the two.² The lady, however, not being aware of those uncomplimentary sentiments, made her proposal to the magistrates, but was dismissed with harsh rebukes. She had need be ashamed, they said, of her willingness to take a condemned traitor for her husband. It was urged, in her behalf, that even in the cruel Alva's time, the ancient custom had been respected, and that victims had been saved from the executioners, on a demand in marriage made even by women of abandoned character.³ But all was of no avail. The pri-

Oct. 26, soners were executed on the 26th October, the same 1587. day on which the sentence had been pronounced. The heads of Volmar and Cosmo were exposed on one of the turrets of the city. That of Maulde was interred with his body.⁴

The Earl was indignant when he heard of the event. As there had been no written proof of his complicity in the conspiracy, the judges had thought it improper to mention his name in the sentences. He, of course, denied any knowledge of the plot, and its proof rested therefore only on the assertion of the prisoners themselves, which, however, was circumstantial, voluntary, and generally believed.⁵

¹ Bor, 97. Van Wyn op Wagen, viii. 72.

² "Maer hy hoerende de selve noemen, en in haer geselschap wel geweest zijnde, hadde weynig moeds dat hy door verlost worden zoude, of ook de selve ten huwelijcke niet begeerende, koude hem niet te vreden stellen," &c.

Bor, xxiii. (III.) 97.

³ Bor, *ubi sup.*

⁴ Bor, Meteren, Reynd, *ubi sup.* Le Petit, II. xiv. 551.

⁵ Ibid.

The only passage bearing on the subject which I have found in Leicester's secret correspondence, is this

France, during the whole of this year of expectation, was ploughed throughout its whole surface by perpetual civil war. The fatal edict of June, 1585, had drowned the unhappy land in blood. Foreign armies, called in by the various contending factions, ravaged its fair territory, butchered its peasantry, and changed its fertile plains to a wilderness. The unhappy creature who wore the crown of Charlemagne and of Hugh Capet, was but the tool in the hands of the most profligate and designing of his own subjects, and of foreigners. Slowly and surely the net, spread by the hands of his own mother, of his own prime minister,¹ of the Duke of Guise, all obeying the command and receiving the stipend of Philip, seemed closing over him. He was without friends, without power to know his friends, if he had them. In his hatred to the Reformation, he had allowed himself to be made the enemy of the only man who could be his friend, or the friend of France. Allied with his mortal foe, whose armies were strengthened

extract from a letter to the Queen:—
 "The States have used great cruelty of late in Leyden, against three persons that favoured your Majesty, whom they put to death, and banished twenty others, whereof their devoted head was one, old Count Meetkerke another. This gentleman can inform you of it, and I will send it, shortly, at more length." Leicester to the Queen, 27 Oct. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

This very meagre allusion to so important an event is almost suspicious in itself, when coupled with the fact that the details were entrusted to a special messenger to communicate by word of mouth. The Earl knew very well that his most secret despatches were read by his antagonists, and he might not be unwilling to deceive them by the slighting tone of these allusions in his private letters.

Of course, it is unfair to place implicit reliance on the confessions of prisoners, anxious to save their lives by implicating the powerful governor. Yet it is difficult to know why they should expect his intercession if they knew themselves to be blasting his character by an impudent falsehood.

Moreover, an elaborate pamphlet, published in defence of those persons who had effected their escape, was dedicated to the Earl himself, and contained a statement of the interview of the ringleaders with the Earl, although a strong attempt was made by the writer to deprive the plot of any criminal character. (Bor, III. xxiii. 95, *seq.* gives the document.) But the pamphlet was denounced and prohibited in Leyden, as an infamous libel and a tissue of falsehoods, and it is hardly just, therefore, to put it in as good evidence either for or against the Earl.

The secret intention of Leicester to obtain possession of certain cities, in order to bridle the States, and to make a good bargain for the Queen, should the worst come to the worst, has been already shown from his private letters.

¹ In October of this year, 1587, Epemon called Villeroy, in the king's presence, "*un petit coquin*," accused him of being a stipendiary of Philip II. and the League, and threatened to spur him as he would an obstinate horse. (*L'Estoile, Registre Journal de Henry III.* ed. 1587, p. 32.)

by contingents from Parma's forces, and paid for by Spanish gold, he was forced to a mock triumph over the foreign mercenaries who came to save his crown, and to submit to the defeat of the flower of his chivalry, by the only man who could rescue France from ruin, and whom France could look up to with respect.

For, on the 20th October, Henry of Navarre had at last gained a victory. After twenty-seven years of perpetual defeat, during which they had been growing stronger and stronger, the Protestants had met the picked troops of Henry III., under the Duc de Joyeuse, near the burgh of Contras. His cousins Condé and Soissons each commanded a wing in the army of the Béarnese. "You are both of my family," said Henry, before the engagement, "and the Lord so help me, but I will show you that I am the eldest born."¹ And during that bloody day the white plume was ever tossing where the battle was fiercest. "I choose to show myself. They *shall* see the Béarnese," was his reply to those who implored him to have a care for his personal safety. And at last, when the day was done, the victory gained, and more French nobles lay dead on the field, as Catharine de' Medici bitterly declared, than had fallen in a battle for twenty years; when two thousand of the King's best troops had been slain, and when the bodies of Joyeuse and his brother had been laid out in the very room where the conqueror's supper, after the battle, was served, but where he refused, with a shudder, to eat, he was still as eager as before—had the wretched Valois been possessed of a spark of manhood, or of intelligence—to shield him and his kingdom from the common enemy.²

For it could hardly be doubtful, even to Henry III., at that moment, that Philip II. and his jackal, the Duke of Guise, were pursuing him to the death, and that, in his breathless doublings to escape, he had been forced to turn upon his natural protector. And now Joyeuse was defeated and slain. "Had it been my brother's son," exclaimed Cardinal de

¹ Péréfixe, 73.

² De Thou. X. L. lxxxvii. Péréfixe, 75-78. 'L'Estolle,' 232.

Bourbon, weeping and wailing, "how much better it would have been." It was not easy to slay the champion of French Protestantism ; yet, to one less buoyant, the game, even after the brilliant but fruitless victory of Coutras, might have seemed desperate. Beggared and outcast, with literally scarce a shirt to his back, without money to pay a corporal's guard, how was he to maintain an army ?

But 'Mucio' was more successful than Joyeuse had been, and the German and Swiss mercenaries who had come across the border to assist the Béarnese, were adroitly handled by Philip's great stipendiary. Henry of Valois, whose troops had just been defeated at Coutras, was now compelled to participate in a more fatal series of triumphs. For alas, the victim had tied himself to the apron-string of "Madam League," and was paraded by her, in triumph, before the eyes of his own subjects and of the world. The passage of the Loire by the auxiliaries was resisted, a series of petty victories was gained by Guise, and, at last, after it was obvious that the leaders of the legions had been corrupted with Spanish ducats, Henry allowed them to depart, rather than give the Balafre opportunity for still farther successes.¹

Then came the triumph in Paris—hosannahs in the churches, huzzas in the public places—not for the King, but for Guise. Paris, more madly in love with her champion than ever, prostrated herself at his feet. For him pæans as to a deliverer. Without him the ark would have fallen into the hands of the Philistines. For the Valois, shouts of scorn from the populace, thunders from the pulpit, anathemas from monk and priest, elaborate invectives from all the pedants of the Sorbonne, distant mutterings of excommunication from Rome—not the toothless beldame of modern days, but the avenging divinity of priest-ridden monarchs. Such were the results of the edicts of June. Spain and the Pope had trampled upon France, and the populace in her capital clapped their hands and jumped for joy. "Miserable country, miserable King," sighed an illustrious patriot, "whom his own

¹ De Thou, *ubi sup.* 'L'Estoile,' 232, 234.

countrymen wish rather to survive, than to die to defend him! Let the name of Huguenot and of Papist be never heard of more. Let us think only of the counter-league. Is France to be saved by opening all its gates to Spain? Is France to be turned out of France, to make a lodging for the Lorrainer and the Spaniard?" Pregnant questions, which could not yet be answered, for the end was not yet. France was to become still more and more a wilderness. And well did that same brave and thoughtful lover of his country declare, that he who should suddenly awake from a sleep of twenty-five years, and revisit that once beautiful land, would deem himself transplanted to a barbarous island of cannibals.¹

It had now become quite obvious that the game of Leicester was played out. His career—as it has now been fully exhibited—could have but one termination. He had made himself thoroughly odious to the nation whom he came to govern. He had lost for ever the authority once spontaneously bestowed, and he had attempted in vain, both by fair means and foul, to recover that power. There was nothing left him but retreat. Of this he was thoroughly convinced.² He was anxious to be gone, the republic most desirous to be rid of him, her Majesty impatient to have her favourite back again. The indulgent Queen, seeing nothing to blame in his conduct, while her indignation at the attitude maintained by the Provinces was boundless, permitted him, accordingly, to return; and in her letter to the States, announcing this decision, she took a fresh opportunity of emptying her wrath upon their heads.

She told them, that, notwithstanding her frequent messages to them, signifying her evil contentment with their unthankfulness for her exceeding great benefits, and with their gross violations of their contract with herself and with Leicester, whom they had, of their own accord, made absolute governor

¹ Duplessis Mornay, 'Mem.' iv. 1-34.

² "'Tis time for me now to look after my own head—sta tempo ch' io

guardi la mia testa," he is said to have exclaimed when the Leyden plot was discovered. (Rey, vii. 134.)

without her instigation ; she had never received any good answer to move her to commit their sins to oblivion, nor had she remarked any amendment in their conduct. On the contrary, she complained that they daily increased their offences, most notoriously in the sight of the world, and in so many points that she lacked words to express them in one letter. She however thought it worth while to allude to some of their transgressions. She declared that their sinister or rather barbarous interpretation of her conduct had been notorious in perverting and falsifying her princely and Christian intentions, when she imparted to them the overtures that had been made to her for a treaty of peace for herself and for them with the King of Spain. Yet although she had required their allowance, before she would give her assent, she had been grieved that the world should see what impudent untruths had been forged upon her, not only by their sufferance, but by their special permission for her Christian good meaning towards them. She denounced the statements as to her having concluded a treaty, not only without their knowledge, but with the sacrifice of their liberty and religion, as utterly false, either for anything done in act, or intended in thought, by her. She complained that upon this most false ground had been heaped a number of like untruths and malicious slanders against her cousin Leicester, who had hazarded his life, spent his substance, left his native country, absented himself from her, and lost his time, only for their service. It had been falsely stated among them, she said, that the Earl had come over the last time, knowing that peace had been secretly concluded. It was false that he had intended to surprise divers of their towns, and deliver them to the King of Spain. All such untruths contained matter so improbable, that it was most strange that any person, having any sense, could imagine them correct. Having thus slightly animadverted upon their wilfulness, unthankfulness, and bad government, and having, in very plain English, given them the lie, eight distinct and separate times upon a single page, she proceeded to inform them that she had recalled her cousin Leicester, having great

cause to use his services in England, and not seeing how, by his tarrying there, he could either profit them or herself. Nevertheless she protested herself not void of compassion for their estate, and for the pitiful condition of the great multitude of kind and godly people, subject to the miseries which, by the States' government, were like to fall upon them, unless God should specially interpose; and she had therefore determined, for the time, to continue her subsidies, according to the covenant between them. If, meantime, she should conclude a peace with Spain, she promised to them the same care for their country as for her own.¹

Accordingly the Earl, after despatching an equally ill-tempered letter to the States, in which he alluded, at unmerciful length, to all the old grievances, blamed them for the loss of Sluys, for which place he protested that they had manifested no more interest than if it had been San Domingo in Hispaniola, took his departure for Flushing.² After remaining there, in a very moody frame of mind, for several days, expecting that the States would, at least, send a committee to wait upon him and receive his farewells, he took leave of them by letter. "God send me shortly a wind to blow me from them all,"³ he exclaimed—a prayer which was soon granted—and before the end of the year he was safely landed in England. "These legs of mine," said he, clapping his hands upon them as he sat in his chamber at Margate, "shall never go again into Holland. Let the States get others to serve their mercenary turn, for me they shall not have."⁴ Upon giving up the government, he caused a medal to be struck in his own honour. The device was a flock of sheep watched by an English mastiff. Two mottoes—"non gregem sed ingratos," and "invitus desero"—expressed his opinion of Dutch ingratitude and his own fidelity. The Hollanders, on their part, struck several medals to commemorate the same event, some of which were not destitute of invention. Upon one of them,

¹ Queen to the States, 8 Nov. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Bor, III. xxiii. 141. Metaren, xiv. 262.

³ Leicester to Atye, 4 Dec. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Stowe, 'Chronicle,' 713.

for instance, was represented an ape smothering her young ones to death in her embrace, with the device, "*Libertas ne ita chara ut simiae catuli*;" while upon the reverse was a man avoiding smoke and falling into the fire, with the inscription, "*Fugiens fumum, incidit in ignem.*"¹

Leicester found the usual sunshine at Greenwich. All the efforts of Norris, Wilkes, and Buckhurst, had been insufficient to raise even a doubt in Elizabeth's mind as to the wisdom and integrity by which his administration of the Provinces had been characterised from beginning to end. Those who had appealed from his hatred to the justice of their sovereign, had met with disgrace and chastisement. But for the great Earl, the Queen's favour was a rock of adamant. At a private interview he threw himself at her feet, and with tears and sobs implored her not to receive him in disgrace whom she had sent forth in honour. His blandishments prevailed, as they had always done. Instead, therefore, of appearing before the council, kneeling, to answer such inquiries as ought surely to have been instituted, he took his seat boldly among his colleagues, replying haughtily to all murmurs by a reference to her Majesty's secret instructions.²

The unhappy English soldiers, who had gone forth under his banner in midsummer, had been returning, as they best might, in winter, starving, half-naked wretches, to beg a morsel of bread at the gates of Greenwich palace, and to be driven away as vagabonds, with threats of the stocks.³ This was not the fault of the Earl, for he had fed them with his own generous hand in the Netherlands, week after week, when no money for their necessities could be obtained from the paymasters. Two thousand pounds had been sent by Elizabeth to her soldiers when sixty-four thousand pounds arrearage were due,⁴

¹ Bor, III. xxiii. 153. Hooft, 'Vervolgh,' 210. Meteren, xii. 238.

² Camden, III. 400. Baker, 375.

³ Memorial, in Burghley's own hand, Nov. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ "She would by no means yield to send over any greater sum than 2000*l*, though the Lord Treasurer, Sir Thomas

Shirley, and myself, did let her understand that there was due unto the soldiers serving there the first of July last 44,000*l*, and before it could arrive there, at the least 64,000*l*." Walsingham to Leicester, 14 Aug. 1587. (Br Mus. Galba, D. I. p. 253, MS.)

and no language could exaggerate the misery to which these outcasts, according to eye-witnesses of their own nation, were reduced.

Lord Willoughby was appointed to the command of what remained of these unfortunate troops, upon the Earl's departure. The sovereignty of the Netherlands remained undisputed with the States. Leicester resigned his commission by an instrument dated $\frac{17}{21}$ December, which, however, never reached the Netherlands till April of the following year.¹ From that time forth the government of the republic maintained the same forms which the assembly had claimed for it in the long controversy with the governor-general, and which have been sufficiently described.

Meantime the negotiations for a treaty, no longer secret, continued. The Queen, infatuated as ever, still believed in the sincerity of Farnese, while that astute personage and his master were steadily maturing their schemes. A matrimonial alliance was secretly projected between the King of Scots and Philip's daughter, the Infanta Isabella, with the consent of the Pope and the whole college of cardinals; and James, by the whole force of the Holy League, was to be placed upon the throne of Elizabeth. In the case of his death, without issue, Philip was to succeed quietly to the crowns of England, Scotland, and Ireland.² Nothing could be simpler or more rational, and accordingly these arrangements were the table-talk at Rome, and met with general approbation.

Communications to this effect, coming straight from the Colonna palace, were thought sufficiently circumstantial to be transmitted to the English government. Maurice of Nassau wrote with his own hand to Walsingham, professing a warm attachment to the cause in which Holland and England were united, and perfect personal devotion to the English Queen.³

¹ Bor, III. xxiii. 143, *seq.* Meteren, xiv. 262. Reynd, vii. 137, 138.

² Le Sieur to Walsingham, 3 Dec. 1587. Maurice de Nassau, to same, 9 Dec. 1587. (S. P. Office, MSS.)

³ "Je ne vous escrirai rien sur les

propos d'Odo Colonna," wrote Maurice, "car vous les entendrez bien par la lecture du sommaire que je vous envoie, mais bien je vous assure qu'il est un jeune homme d'esprit vif et prompt, qui parle bien et a été bien

His language was not that of a youth, who, according to Leicester's repeated insinuations, was leagued with the most distinguished soldiers and statesmen of the Netherlands to sell their country to Spain.

But Elizabeth was not to be convinced. She thought it extremely probable that the Provinces would be invaded, and doubtless felt some anxiety for England. It was unfortunate that the possession of Sluys had given Alexander such a point of vantage, and there was moreover a fear that he might take possession of Ostend. She had, therefore, already recommended that her own troops should be removed from that city, that its walls should be razed, its marine bulwarks destroyed, and that the ocean should be let in to swallow the devoted city forever—the inhabitants having been previously allowed to take their departure. For it was assumed by her Majesty that to attempt resistance would be idle, and that Ostend could never stand a siege.¹

The advice was not taken, and before the end of her reign Elizabeth was destined to see this indefensible city—only fit, in her judgment, to be abandoned to the waves—become memorable, throughout all time, for the longest, and, in many respects, the most remarkable siege which modern history has recorded, the famous leaguer, in which the first European

nourri. Toutefois montrant par ses propos qu'il ne sçait gueres de choses hors la cour de Rome, de la connoissance des bonnes maisons, et a paru a aucuns des miens plus sages et experimentés que moi, qu'il y avoit fondement en ce qu'il disoit, et que j'en devois advertir Sa M. tant pour la qualité de son dire, que pour faire connaitre a Sa M. quand l'occasion se presentoit que je lui suis tres affectionné serviteur, ce qu'il convient par ma qualité et maison de monstrier par effet et non par parolles. Et en cette intention je me suis trouvé en ceste armée assemblée par ma diligence de tous les endroits de mes gouvernemens, en intention, si Dieu m'en fait la grace, de combattre la puissance des plus grands ennemis de Sa Majesté, et de toute la Chretienité, ce sont le Roi d'Espagne

et le Prince de Parme, lequel de tout mon cœur, je désire trouver en personne où j'espère avec l'aide de Dieu lui faire connaitre qu'il n'est pas si bon soldat ou il trouve resistance, que quand les hommes mal conseillés lui mettent les victoires en main de concevoir par leur lacheté de tant de prises de belles villes. Je vous supplie me tenir en la bonne grace de Sa M., de me continuer l'amitié que vous avez portée à monseigneur mon père, car j'espère que Dieu me fait grace de l'ensuivre promptement en constance et ferme resolution. Jusqu'à je prierai Dieu," &c. Maurice de Nassau to Walsingham, 9 Dec. 1587. (S. P. Office MS.)

¹ Queen to Leicester, 8 Nov. 1587, in Burghley's hand. (S. P. Office MS.)

captains of the coming age were to take their lessons, year after year, in the school of the great Dutch soldier, who was now but a "solemn, sly youth," just turned of twenty.

The only military achievement which characterized the close of the year, to the great satisfaction of the Provinces and the annoyance of Parma, was the surprise of the city of Bonn. The indefatigable Martin Schenk—in fulfilment of his great contract with the States-General, by which the war on the Rhine had been farmed out to him on such profitable terms—had led his mercenaries against this important town. He had found one of its gates somewhat insecurely guarded, placed a mortar under it at night, and occupied a neighbouring pig-stye with a number of his men, who by chasing, maltreating, and slaughtering the swine, had raised an unearthly din, sufficient to drown the martial operations at the gate. In brief, the place was easily mastered, and taken possession of by Martin, in the name of the deposed elector, Gebhard Truchsess—the first stroke of good fortune which had for a long time befallen that melancholy prelate.¹

The administration of Leicester has been so minutely pictured, that it would be superfluous to indulge in many concluding reflections. His acts and words have been made to speak for themselves. His career in the country has been described with much detail, because the period was a great epoch of transition. The republic of the Netherlands, during those years, acquired consistency and permanent form. It seemed possible, on the Earl's first advent, that the Provinces might become part and parcel of the English realm. Whether such a consummation would have been desirable or not, is a fruitless enquiry. But it is certain that the selection of such a man as Leicester made that result impossible. Doubtless there were many errors committed by all parties. The Queen

¹ Bor, III. xxii. 143. Meteren, xiv. 262. Wagenaar, viii. 266. Parma to Philip II. 29 Dec. 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

"According to this, Schenk is not dead yet, as reported," (segun esto

no es muerto como habian dicho), was Philip's judicious marginal observation on the letter in which Parma communicated this clever exploit of Martin.

was supposed by the Netherlands to be secretly desirous of accepting the sovereignty of the Provinces, provided she were made sure, by the Earl's experience, that they were competent to protect themselves. But this suspicion was unfounded. The result of every investigation showed the country so full of resources, of wealth, and of military and naval capabilities, that, united with England, it would have been a source of great revenue and power, not a burthen and an expense. Yet, when convinced of such facts, by the statistics which were liberally laid before her by her confidential agents, she never manifested, either in public or private, any intention of accepting the sovereignty. This being her avowed determination, it was an error on the part of the States, before becoming thoroughly acquainted with the man's character, to confer upon Leicester the almost boundless authority which they granted on his first arrival. It was a still graver mistake, on the part of Elizabeth, to give way to such explosions of fury, both against the governor and the States, when informed of the offer and acceptance of that authority. The Earl, elevated by the adulation of others, and by his own vanity, into an almost sovereign attitude, saw himself chastised before the world, like an aspiring lackey, by her in whose favour he had felt most secure. He found himself, in an instant, humbled and ridiculous. Between himself and the Queen it was something of a lovers' quarrel, and he soon found balsam in the hand that smote him. But though reinstated in authority, he was never again the object of reverence in the land he was attempting to rule. As he came to know the Netherlands better, he recognized the great capacity which their statesmen concealed under a plain and sometimes a plebeian exterior, and the splendid grandee hated, where at first he had only despised. The Netherlands, too, who had been used to look up almost with worship to a plain man of kindly manners, in felt hat and bargeman's woollen jacket, whom they called "Father William," did not appreciate, as they ought, the magnificence of the stranger who had been sent to govern them. The Earl was handsome, quick-witted, brave; but he was

neither wise in council nor capable in the field. He was intolerably arrogant, passionate, and revengeful. He hated easily, and he hated for life. It was soon obvious that no cordiality of feeling or of action could exist between him and the plain, stubborn Hollanders. He had the fatal characteristic of loving only the persons who flattered him. With much perception of character, sense of humour, and appreciation of intellect, he recognized the power of the leading men in the nation, and sought to gain them. So long as he hoped success, he was loud in their praises. They were all wise, substantial, well-languaged, big fellows, such as were not to be found in England or anywhere else. When they refused to be made his tools, they became tinkers, boors, devils, and atheists. He covered them with curses and devoted them to the gibbet. He began by warmly commending Buys and Barneveld, Hohenlo and Maurice, and endowing them with every virtue. Before he left the country he had accused them of every crime, and would cheerfully, if he could, have taken the life of every one of them. And it was quite the same with nearly every Englishman who served with or under him. Wilkes and Buckhurst, however much the objects of his previous esteem, so soon as they ventured to censure or even to criticise his proceedings, were at once devoted to perdition. Yet, after minute examination of the record, public and private, neither Wilkes nor Buckhurst can be found guilty of treachery or animosity towards him, but are proved to have been governed, in all their conduct, by a strong sense of duty to their sovereign, the Netherlands, and Leicester himself.

To Sir John Norris, it must be allowed, that he was never fickle, for he had always entertained for that distinguished general an honest, unswerving, and infinite hatred, which was not susceptible of increase or diminution by any act or word. Pelham, too, whose days were numbered, and who was dying bankrupt and broken-hearted, at the close of the Earl's administration, had always been regarded by him with tenderness and affection. But Pelham had never thwarted him, had

exposed his life for him, and was always proud of being his faithful, unquestioning, humble adherent. With perhaps this single exception, Leicester found himself, at the end of his second term in the Provinces, without a single friend and with few respectable partisans. Subordinate mischievous intriguers like Deventer, Junius, and Otheman, were his chief advisers and the instruments of his schemes.

With such qualifications it was hardly possible—even if the current of affairs had been flowing smoothly—that he should prove a successful governor of the new republic. But when the numerous errors and adventitious circumstances are considered—for some of which he was responsible, while of others he was the victim—it must be esteemed fortunate that no great catastrophe occurred. His immoderate elevation, his sudden degradation, his controversy in regard to the sovereignty, his abrupt departure for England, his protracted absence, his mistimed return, the secret instructions for his second administration, the obstinate parsimony and persistent ill-temper of the Queen—who, from the beginning to the end of the Earl's government, never addressed a kindly word to the Netherlanders, but was ever censuring and brow-beating them in public state-papers and private epistles—the treason of York and Stanley, above all, the disastrous and concealed negotiations with Parma, and the desperate attempts upon Amsterdam and Leyden—all placed him in a most unfortunate position from first to last. But he was not competent for his post under any circumstances. He was not the statesman to deal in policy with Buys, Barneveld, Ortel, Sainte Aldegonde; nor the soldier to measure himself against Alexander Farnese. His administration was a failure; and although he repeatedly hazarded his life, and poured out his wealth in their behalf with an almost unequalled liberality, he could never gain the hearts of the Netherlanders. English valour, English intelligence, English truthfulness, English generosity, were endearing England more and more to Holland. The statesmen of both countries were brought into closest union, and learned to appreciate and to

respect each other, while they recognized that the fate of their respective commonwealths was indissolubly united. But it was to the efforts of Walsingham, Drake, Raleigh, Wilkes, Buckburst, Norris, Willoughby, Williams, Vere, Russell, and the brave men who fought under their banners or their counsels, on every battle-field, and in every beleaguered town in the Netherlands, and to the universal spirit and sagacity of the English nation, in this grand crisis of its fate, that these fortunate results were owing; not to the Earl of Leicester, nor—during the term of his administration—to Queen Elizabeth herself.

In brief, the proper sphere of this remarkable personage, and the one in which he passed the greater portion of his existence, was that of a magnificent court favourite, the spoiled darling, from youth to his death-bed, of the great English Queen; whether to the advantage or not of his country and the true interests of his sovereign, there can hardly be at this day any difference of opinion.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Prophecies as to the Year 1588—Distracted Condition of the Dutch Republic—Willoughby reluctantly takes Command—English Commissioners come to Ostend—Secretary Garnier and Robert Cecil—Cecil accompanies Dale to Ghent—And finds the Desolation complete—Interview of Dale and Cecil with Parma—His fervent Expressions in favour of Peace—Cecil makes a Tour in Flanders—And sees much that is remarkable—Interviews of Dr. Rogers with Parma—Wonderful Harangues of the Envoy—Extraordinary Amenity of Alexander—With which Rogers is much touched—The Queen not pleased with her Envoy—Credulity of the English Commissioners—Cereemonious Meeting of all the Envoys—Consummate Art in wasting Time—Long Disputes about Commissions—The Spanish Commissions meant to deceive—Disputes about Cessation of Arms—Spanish Duplicity and Procrastination—Pedantry and Credulity of Dr. Dale—The Papal Bull and Dr. Allen's Pamphlet—Dale sent to ask Explanations—Parma denies all Knowledge of either—Croft believes to the last in Alexander—Dangerous Discord in North Holland—Leicester's Resignation arrives—Enmity of Willoughby and Maurice—Willoughby's dark Picture of Affairs—Hatred between States and Leicesterians—Maurice's Answer to the Queen's Charges—End of Sonoy's Rebellion—Philip foment the Civil War in France—League's Threats and Plots against Henry—Mucio arrives in Paris—He is received with Enthusiasm—The King flies, and Spain triumphs in Paris—States expostulate with the Queen—English Statesmen still deceived—Deputies from Netherland Churches—hold Conference with the Queen—And present long Memorials—More Conversations with the Queen—National Spirit of England and Holland—Dissatisfaction with Queen's Course—Bitter Complaints of Lord Howard—Want of Preparation in Army and Navy—Sanguine Statements of Leicester—Activity of Parma—The painful Suspense continues.

THE year 1588 had at last arrived—that fatal year concerning which the German astrologers—more than a century before had prognosticated such dire events.¹ As the epoch approached it was firmly believed by many that the end of the world was at hand, while the least superstitious could not doubt that great calamities were impending over the nations. Portents observed during the winter and in various parts of Europe came to increase the prevailing panic. It rained blood in Sweden, monstrous births occurred in France, and at Weimar it was gravely reported by eminent chroniclers that

¹ De Thou, x. 218. Camden, III. 402. Strada, II. ix. 530. Pasquier, *Oeuvres*, II. 331.

the sun had appeared at mid-day holding a drawn sword in his mouth—a warlike portent whose meaning could not be mistaken.¹

But, in truth, it needed no miracles nor prophecies to enforce the conviction that a long procession of disasters was steadily advancing. With France rent asunder by internal convulsions, with its imbecile king not even capable of commanding a petty faction among his own subjects, with Spain the dark cause of unnumbered evils, holding Italy in its grasp, firmly allied with the Pope, already having reduced and nearly absorbed France, and now, after long and patient preparation, about to hurl the concentrated vengeance and hatred of long years upon the little kingdom of England, and its only ally—the just organized commonwealth of the Netherlands—it would have been strange indeed if the dullest intellect had not dreamed of tragical events. It was not encouraging that there should be distraction in the counsels of the two States so immediately threatened; that the Queen of England should be at variance with her wisest and most faithful statesmen as to their course of action, and that deadly quarrels should exist between the leading men of the Dutch republic and the English governor, who had assumed the responsibility of directing its energies against the common enemy.

The blackest night that ever descended upon the Netherlands—more disappointing because succeeding a period of comparative prosperity and triumph—was the winter of 1587-8, when Leicester had terminated his career by his abrupt departure for England, after his second brief attempt at administration. For it was exactly at this moment of anxious expectation, when dangers were rolling up from the south till not a ray of light or hope could pierce the universal darkness, that the little commonwealth was left without a chief. The English Earl departed, shaking the dust from his feet; but he did not resign. The supreme authority—so far as he could claim it—was again transferred, with his person, to England.

¹ Ibid., *ubi sup.*

The consequences were immediate and disastrous. All the Leicestrians refused to obey the States-General. Utrecht, the stronghold of that party, announced its unequivocal intention to annex itself, without any conditions whatever, to the English crown, while, in Holland, young Maurice was solemnly installed stadholder, and captain-general of the Provinces, under the guidance of Hohenlo and Barneveld. But his authority was openly defied in many important cities within his jurisdiction by military chieftains who had taken the oaths of allegiance to Leicester as governor, and who refused to renounce fidelity to the man who had deserted their country, but who had not resigned his authority. Of these mutineers the most eminent was Diedrich Sonoy, governor of North Holland, a soldier of much experience, sagacity, and courage, who had rendered great services to the cause of liberty and Protestantism, and had defaced it by acts of barbarity which had made his name infamous. Against this refractory chieftain it was necessary for Hohenlo and Maurice to lead an armed force, and to besiege him in his stronghold—the important city of Medenblik—which he resolutely held for Leicester, although Leicester had definitely departed, and which he closed against Maurice, although Maurice was the only representative of order and authority within the distracted commonwealth. And thus civil war had broken out in the little scarcely-organized republic, as if there were not dangers and bloodshed enough impending over it from abroad. And the civil war was the necessary consequence of the Earl's departure.

The English forces—reduced as they were by sickness, famine, and abject poverty—were but a remnant of the brave and well-seasoned bands which had faced the Spaniards with success on so many battle-fields.

The general who now assumed chief command over them—by direction of Leicester, subsequently confirmed by the Queen—was Lord Willoughby. A daring, splendid dragoon, an honest, chivalrous, and devoted servant of his Queen, a conscientious adherent of Leicester, and a firm believer in his capacity and character, he was, however, not a man of suffi-

cient experience or subtlety to perform the various tasks imposed upon him by the necessities of such a situation. Quick-witted, even brilliant in intellect, and the bravest of the brave on the battle-field, he was neither a sagacious administrator nor a successful commander. And he honestly confessed his deficiencies, and disliked the post to which he had been elevated. He scorned baseness, intrigue, and petty quarrels, and he was impatient of control. Testy, choleric, and quarrelsome, with a high sense of honour, and a keen perception of insult, very modest and very proud, he was not likely to feed with wholesome appetite upon the unsavoury annoyances which were the daily bread of a chief commander in the Netherlands. "I ambitiously affect not high titles, but round dealing," he said; "desiring rather to be a private lance with indifferent reputation, than a colonel-general spotted or defamed with wants."¹ He was not the politician to be matched against the unscrupulous and all-accomplished Farnese; and indeed no man better than Willoughby could illustrate the enormous disadvantage under which Englishmen laboured at that epoch in their dealings with Italians and Spaniards. The profuse indulgence in falsehood which characterized southern statesmanship, was more than a match for English love of truth. English soldiers and negotiators went naked into a contest with enemies armed in a panoply of lies. It was an unequal match, as we have already seen, and as we are soon more clearly to see. How was an English soldier who valued his knightly word—how were English diplomatists—among whom one of the most famous—then a lad of twenty, secretary to Lord Essex in the Netherlands—had poetically avowed that "simple truth was highest skill,"—to deal with the thronging Spanish deceits sent northward by the great father of lies who sat in the Escorial?

"It were an ill lesson," said Willoughby, "to teach soldiers the dissimulations of such as follow princes' courts in Italy. For my own part, it is my only end to be loyal and dutiful to my sovereign, and plain to all others that I honour. I see

¹ Willoughby to Leiceister, Sept. 1587. (Br. Mus. Galba, D. II. p. 141, MS.)

the finest reynard loses his best coat as well as the poorest sheep.”¹ He was also a strong Leicestrian, and had imbibed much of the Earl’s resentment against the leading politicians of the States. Willoughby was sorely in need of council. That shrewd and honest Welshman—Roger Williams—was, for the moment, absent. Another of the same race and character commanded in Bergen-op-Zoom, but was not more gifted with administrative talent than the general himself.

“Sir Thomas Morgan is a very sufficient, gallant gentleman,” said Willoughby, “and in truth a very old soldier ; but we both have need of one that can both give and keep counsel better than ourselves. For action he is undoubtedly very able, if there were no other means to conquer but only to give blows.”²

In brief, the new commander of the English forces in the Netherlands was little satisfied with the States, with the enemy, or with himself ; and was inclined to take but a dismal view of the disjointed commonwealth, which required so incompetent a person as he professed himself to be to set it right.

“Tis a shame to show my wants,” he said, “but too great a fault of duty that the Queen’s reputation be frustrate. What is my slender experience ! What an honourable person do I succeed ! What an encumbered popular state is left ! What withered sinews, which it passes my cunning to restore ! What an enemy in head greater than heretofore ! And wherewithal should I sustain this burthen ? For the wars I am fitter to obey than to command. For the state, I am a man prejudicated in their opinion, and not the better liked of them that I have earnestly followed the general, and, being one that wants both opinion and experience with them I have to deal, and means to win more or to maintain that which is left, what good may be looked for ? ”³

The supreme authority—by the retirement of Leicester—was once more the subject of dispute. As on his first departure, so also on this his second and final one, he had left a

¹ Same to Burghley, 16 July, 1587. (Br. Mus. Galba, D. I. p. 10, MS.)

² Willoughby to Burghley, last cited.

³ Willoughby to Burghley, 18 Nov. 1587. (Br. Mus. Galba, D. II. 210, MS.)

commission to the state-council to act as an executive body during his absence. But, although he nominally still retained his office, in reality no man believed in his return ; and the States-General were ill inclined to brook a species of guardianship over them, with which they believed themselves mature enough to dispense. Moreover the state-council, composed mainly of Leicestrians, would expire, by limitation of its commission, early in February of that year. The dispute for power would necessarily terminate, therefore, in favour of the States-General.¹

Meantime—while this internal revolution was taking place in the polity of the commonwealth—the gravest disturbances were its natural consequence. There were mutinies in the garrisons of Heusden, of Gertruydenberg, of Medenblik, as alarming, and threatening to become as chronic in their character, as those extensive military rebellions which often rendered the Spanish troops powerless at the most critical epochs. The cause of these mutinies was uniformly, want of pay, the pretext, the oath to the Earl of Leicester, which was declared incompatible with the allegiance claimed by Maurice in the name of the States-General. The mutiny of Gertruydenberg was destined to be protracted ; that of Medenblik, dividing, as it did, the little territory of Holland in its very heart, it was most important at once to suppress. Sonoy, however—who was so stanch a Leicestrian, that his Spanish contemporaries uniformly believed him to be an Englishman²—held out for a long time, as will be seen, against the threats and even the armed demonstrations of Maurice and the States.

Meantime the English sovereign, persisting in her delusion, and despite the solemn warnings of her own wisest counsellors, and the passionate remonstrances of the States-General of the Netherlands, sent her peace-commissioners to the Duke of Parma.

The Earl of Derby, Lord Cobham, Sir James Croft, Valentine Dale, doctor of laws, and former ambassador at Vienna, and Dr. Rogers, envoys on the part of the Queen, arrived in

¹ Compare Van der Kemp, 'Maurits van Nassau,' I. 58, seq.
² Herrera, III. 11, 84. Cornero, 'Guerras de Flandes,' 224.

the Netherlands in February.¹ The commissioners appointed on the part of Farnese were Count AreMBERG, Champagny, Richardot, Jacob Maas, and Secretary Garnier.

If history has ever furnished a lesson, how an unscrupulous tyrant, who has determined upon enlarging his own territories at the expense of his neighbours, upon oppressing human freedom wherever it dared to manifest itself, with fine phrases of religion and order for ever in his mouth, on deceiving his friends and enemies alike, as to his nefarious and almost incredible designs, by means of perpetual and colossal falsehoods; and if such lessons deserve to be pondered, as a source of instruction and guidance for every age, then certainly the secret story of the negotiations by which the wise Queen of England was beguiled, and her kingdom brought to the verge of ruin, in the spring of 1588, is worthy of serious attention.

The English commissioners arrived at Ostend. With them came Robert Cecil, youngest son of Lord-Treasurer Burghley, then twenty-five years of age. He had no official capacity, but was sent by his father, that he might improve his diplomatic talents, and obtain some information as to the condition of the Netherlands. A slight, crooked, hump-backed young gentleman, dwarfish in stature, but with a face not irregular in feature, and thoughtful and subtle in expression, with reddish hair, a thin tawny beard, and large, pathetic, greenish-coloured eyes, with a mind and manners already trained to courts and cabinets, and with a disposition almost ingenuous, as compared to the massive dissimulation with which it was to be contrasted, and with what was, in after-times, to constitute a portion of his own character, Cecil, young as he was, could not be considered the least important of the envoys. The Queen, who loved proper men, called him "her pigmy;" and "although," he observed with whimsical courtliness, "I may not find fault with the sporting name she gives me, yet *seem I only not to dislike it, because she gives it.*"² The strongest man among them was Valentine Dale, who had

¹ Camden, III. 407.

² R. Cecil to Burghley, ¹⁶/₂₆ Feb. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

much shrewdness, experience, and legal learning, but who valued himself, above all things, upon his Latinity. It was a consolation to him, while his adversaries were breaking Priscian's head as fast as the Duke, their master, was breaking his oaths, that his own syntax was as clear as his conscience.¹ The feeblest commissioner was James-a-Croft, who had already exhibited himself with very anile characteristics, and whose subsequent manifestations were to seem like dotage. Doctor Rogers, learned in the law, as he unquestionably was, had less skill in reading human character, or in deciphering the physiognomy of a Farnese, while Lord Derby, every inch a grandee, with Lord Cobham to assist him, was not the man to cope with the astute Richardot, the profound and experienced Champagny, or that most voluble and most rhetorical of doctors of law, Jacob Maas of Antwerp.

The commissioners, on their arrival, were welcomed by Secretary Garnier, who had been sent to Ostend to greet them. An adroit, pleasing, courteous gentleman, thirty-six years of age, small, handsome, and attired not quite as a soldier, nor exactly as one of the long robe, wearing a cloak furred to the knee, a cassock of black velvet, with plain gold buttons, and a gold chain about his neck, the secretary delivered handsomely the Duke of Parma's congratulations, recommended great expedition in the negotiations, and was then invited by the Earl of Derby to dine with the commissioners.² He was accompanied by a servant in plain livery, who—so soon as his master had made his bow to the English envoys—had set forth for a stroll through the town. The modest-looking valet, however, was a distinguished engineer in disguise, who had been sent by Alexander for the especial purpose of examining the fortifications of Ostend³—that town being a point much coveted, and liable to immediate attack by the Spanish commander.

Meanwhile Secretary Garnier made himself very agreeable, showing wit, experience, and good education; and, after

¹ Valentine Dale to Walsingham, 14 March, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² R. Cecil to Burghley, $\frac{4}{14}$ March, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Parma to Philip II., 20 March, 1588. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

dinner, was accompanied to his lodgings by Dr. Rogers and other gentlemen, with whom—especially with Cecil—he held much conversation.

Knowing that this young gentleman “wanted not an honourable father,” the Secretary was very desirous that he should take this opportunity to make a tour through the Provinces, examine the cities, and especially “note the miserable ruins of the poor country and people.” He would then feelingly perceive how much they had to answer for, whose mad rebellion against their sovereign lord and master had caused so great an effusion of blood, and the wide desolation of such goodly towns and territories.

Cecil probably entertained a suspicion that the sovereign lord and master, who had been employed, twenty years long, in butchering his subjects and in ravaging their territory to feed his executioners and soldiers, might almost be justified in treating human beings as beasts and reptiles, if they had not at last rebelled. He simply and diplomatically answered, however, that he could not but concur with the Secretary in lamenting the misery of the Provinces and people so utterly despoiled and ruined, but, as it might be matter of dispute, “from what head this fountain of calamity was both fed and derived, he would not enter further therein, it being a matter much too high for his capacity.” He expressed also the hope that the King’s heart might sympathize with that of her Majesty, in earnest compassion for all this suffering, and in determination to compound their differences.¹

On the following day there was some conversation with Garnier, on preliminary and formal matters, followed in the evening by a dinner at Lord Cobham’s lodgings—a banquet which the forlorn condition of the country scarcely permitted to be luxurious. “We rather pray here for satiety,” said Cecil, “than ever think of variety.”²

It was hoped by the Englishmen that the Secretary would take his departure after dinner; for the governor of Ostend, Sir John Conway, had an uneasy sensation, during his visit,

¹ Cecil to Burghley, MS. last cited.

² Ibid.

that the unsatisfactory condition of the defences would attract his attention, and that a sudden attack by Farnese might be the result. Sir John was not aware, however, of the minute and scientific observations then making—at the very moment when Mr. Garnier was entertaining the commissioners with his witty and instructive conversation—by the unobtrusive menial who had accompanied the Secretary to Ostend. In order that those observations might be as thorough as possible, rather than with any view to ostensible business, the envoy of Parma now declared that—on account of the unfavourable state of the tide—he had resolved to pass another night at Ostend. “We could have spared his company,” said Cecil, “but their Lordships considered it convenient that he should be used well.” So Mr. Comptroller Croft gave the affable Secretary a dinner-invitation for the following day.¹

Here certainly was a masterly commencement on the part of the Spanish diplomatists. There was not one stroke of business during the visit of the Secretary. He had been sent simply to convey a formal greeting, and to take the names of the English commissioners—a matter which could have been done in an hour as well as in a week. But it must be remembered, that, at that very moment, the Duke was daily expecting intelligence of the sailing of the Armada, and that Philip, on his part, supposed the Duke already in England, at the head of his army. Under these circumstances, therefore—when the whole object of the negotiation, so far as Parma and his master were concerned, was to amuse and to gain time—it was already ingenious in Garnier to have consumed several days in doing nothing; and to have obtained plans and descriptions of Ostend into the bargain.

Garnier—when his departure could no longer, on any pretext, be deferred—took his leave, once more warmly urging Robert Cecil to make a little tour in the obedient Netherlands, and to satisfy himself, by personal observation, of their miserable condition. As Dr. Dale purposed making a preliminary visit to the Duke of Parma at Ghent, it was determined accordingly that he should be accompanied by Cecil.

¹ Cecil to Burghley, MS. last cited.

That young gentleman had already been much impressed by the forlorn aspect of the country about Ostend—for, although the town was itself in possession of the English, it was in the midst of the enemy's territory. Since the fall of Sluys the Spaniards were masters of all Flanders, save this one much-coveted point. And although the Queen had been disposed to abandon that city, and to suffer the ocean to overwhelm it, rather than that she should be at charges to defend it, yet its possession was of vital consequence to the English-Dutch cause, as time was ultimately to show. Meanwhile the position was already a very important one, for—according to the predatory system of warfare of the day—it was an excellent starting-point for those marauding expeditions against persons and property, in which neither the Dutch nor English were less skilled than the Flemings or Spaniards. “The land all about here,” said Cecil, “is so devastated, that where the open country was wont to be covered with kine and sheep, it is now fuller of wild boars and wolves; whereof many come so nigh the town that the sentinels—three of whom watch every night upon a sand-hill outside the gates—have had them in a dark night upon them ere they were aware.”¹

But the garrison of Ostend was quite as dangerous to the peasants and the country squires of Flanders, as were the wolves or wild boars; and many a pacific individual of retired habits, and with a remnant of property worth a ransom, was doomed to see himself whisked from his seclusion by Conway's troopers, and made a compulsory guest at the city. Prisoners were brought in from a distance of sixty miles; and there was one old gentleman, “well-linguaged,” who “confessed merrily to Cecil, that when the soldiers fetched him out of his own mansion-house, sitting safe in his study, he was as little in fear of the garrison of Ostend as he was of the Turk or the devil.”²

¹ And Doctor Rogers held very similar language: “The most dolorous and heavy sights in this voyage to Ghent, by me weighed,” he said; “seeing the countries which, heretofore, by traffic of merchants, as much as any other I have seen flourish, now partly drowned, and, except certain great cities, wholly burned, ruined,

and desolate, possessed, I say, with wolves, wild boars, and foxes—a great testimony of the wrath of God,” &c.

&c. Dr. Rogers to the Queen,¹ Ap il, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Cecil to Burghley,⁴ March, MS already cited.

Three days after the departure of Garnier, Dr. Dale and his attendants started upon their expedition from Ostend to Ghent—an hour's journey or so in these modern times. The English envoys, in the sixteenth century, ⁷ March, 1588. found it a more formidable undertaking. They were many hours traversing the four miles to Oudenburg, their first halting-place; for the waters were out, there having been a great breach of the sea-dyke of Ostend, a disaster threatening destruction to town and country.¹ At Oudenburg, a "small and wretched hole," as Garnier had described it to be, there was, however, a garrison of three thousand Spanish soldiers, under the Marquis de Renti. From these a convoy of fifty troopers was appointed to protect the English travellers to Bruges. Here they arrived at three o'clock, were met outside the gates by the famous General La Motte, and by him escorted to their lodgings in the "English house," and afterwards handsomely entertained at supper in his own quarters.

The General's wife, Madame de la Motte, was, according to Cecil, "a fair gentlewoman of discreet and modest behaviour, and yet not unwilling sometimes to hear herself speak;"² so that in her society, and in that of her sister—"a nun of the order of the Mounts, but who, like the rest of the sisterhood, wore an ordinary dress in the evening, and might leave the convent if asked in marriage"—the supper passed off very agreeably.

In the evening Cecil found that his father had formerly occupied the same bedroom of the English hotel in which he was then lodged; for he found that Lord Burghley ^{Friday, March 8, 1588.} had scrawled his name in the chimney-corner—a fact which was highly gratifying to the son.³

The next morning, at seven o'clock, the travellers set forth for Ghent. The journey was a miserable one. It was as cold and gloomy weather as even a Flemish month of March could furnish. A drizzling rain was falling all day long, the lanes were foul and miry, the frequent thickets which overhung

¹ Cecil to Burghley, ¹⁰ March, 1588.
(S. P. Office MS.)

² Same to same. (MS. last cited.)
³ Ibid.

their path were swarming with the freebooters of Zeeland, who were "ever at hand," says Cecil, "to have picked our purses, but that they descried our convoy, and so saved themselves in the woods." Sitting on horseback ten hours without alighting, under such circumstances as these, was not luxurious for a fragile little gentleman like Queen Elizabeth's "pigmy;" especially as Dr. Dale and himself had only half a red herring between them for luncheon, and supped afterwards upon an orange.¹ The envoy protested that when they could get a couple of eggs a piece, while travelling in Flanders, "they thought they fared like princes."²

Nevertheless Cecil and himself fought it out manfully, and when they reached Ghent, at five in the evening, they were met by their acquaintance Garnier, and escorted to their lodgings. Here they were waited upon by President Richardot, "a tall gentleman," on behalf of the Duke of Parma, and then left to their much-needed repose.

Nothing could be more forlorn than the country of the obedient Netherlands, through which their day's journey had led them. Desolation had been the reward of obedience. "The misery of the inhabitants," said Cecil, "is incredible, both without the town, where all things are wasted, houses spoiled, and grounds unlaboured, and also, even in these great cities, where they are for the most part poor beggars even in the fairest houses."³

And all this human wretchedness was the elaborate work of one man—one dull, heartless bigot, living, far away, a life of laborious ease and solemn sensuality; and, in reality, almost as much removed from these fellow-creatures of his, whom he called his subjects, as if he had been the inhabitant of another planet. Has history many more instructive warnings against the horrors of arbitrary government—against the folly of mankind in ever tolerating the rule of a single irresponsible individual, than the lesson furnished by the life-work of that crowned criminal, Philip the Second?

¹ Dale to Burghley, $\frac{14}{24}$ March, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.) • Ibid. • Ibid.

The longing for peace on the part of these unfortunate obedient Flemings was intense. Incessant cries for peace reached the ears of the envoys on every side. Alas, it would have been better for these peace-wishers, had they stood side by side with their brethren, the noble Hollanders and Zeelanders, when they had been wrestling, if not peace, yet independence and liberty, from Philip, with their own right hands. Now the obedient Flemings were but fuel for the vast flame which the monarch was kindling for the destruction of Christendom—if all Christendom were not willing to accept his absolute dominion.

The burgomasters of Ghent—of Ghent, once the powerful, the industrious, the opulent, the free, of all cities in the world now the most abject and forlorn—came in the morning to wait upon Elizabeth's envoy, and to present him, according to ancient custom, with some flasks of wine. They came with tears streaming down their cheeks, earnestly expressing the desire of their hearts for peace, and their joy that at least it had now "begun to be thought on."¹

"It is quite true," replied Dr. Dale, "that her excellent Majesty the Queen—filled with compassion for your condition, and having been informed that the Duke of Parma is desirous of peace—has vouchsafed to make this overture. If it take not the desired effect, let not the blame rest upon her, but upon her adversaries." To these words the magistrates all said Amen, and invoked blessings on her Majesty.² And most certainly, Elizabeth was sincerely desirous of peace, even at greater sacrifices than the Duke could well have imagined; but there was something almost diabolic in the cold dissimulation by which her honest compassion was mocked, and the tears of a whole people in its agony made the laughing-stock of a despot and his tools.

On Saturday morning, Richardot and Garnier waited upon the envoy to escort him to the presence of the Duke. Cecil, who accompanied him, was not much impressed with the

¹ Cecil to Burghley, ¹⁰/₂₀ March. MS. already cited.

² Ibid.

grandeur of Alexander's lodgings, and made unfavourable and rather unreasonable comparisons between them and the splendour of Elizabeth's court. They passed through an ante-chamber into a dining-room, thence into an inner chamber, and next into the Duke's room. In the ante-chamber stood Sir William Stanley, the Deventer traitor, conversing with one Mockett, an Englishman, long resident in Flanders. Stanley was meanly dressed, in the Spanish fashion, and as young Cecil, passing through the chamber, looked him in the face, he abruptly turned from him, and pulled his hat over his eyes. "'Twas well he did so," said that young gentleman, "for his taking it off would hardly have cost me mine."¹ Cecil was informed that Stanley was to have a commandery of Malta, and was in good favour with the Duke, who was, however, quite weary of his mutinous and disorderly Irish regiment.²

In the bed-chamber, Farnese—accompanied by the Marquis del Guasto, the Marquis of Renty, the Prince of AreMBERG, President Richardot, and Secretary Cosimo—received the envoy and his companion. "Small and mean was the furniture of the chamber," said Cecil; "and although they attribute this to his love of privacy, yet it is a sign that peace is the mother of all honour and state, as may best be perceived by the court of England, which her Majesty's royal presence doth so adorn, as that it exceedeth this as far as the sun surpasseth in light the other stars of the firmament."³

Here was a compliment to the Queen and her upholsterers drawn in by the ears. Certainly, if the first and best fruit of the much-longed-for peace were only to improve the furniture of royal and ducal apartments, it might be as well perhaps for the war to go on, while the Queen continued to outshine all the stars in the firmament. But the budding courtier and statesman knew that a personal compliment to Elizabeth could never be amiss or ill-timed.

The envoy delivered the greetings of her Majesty to the Duke, and was heard with great attention. Alexander at-

¹ Cecil to Burghley, MS. last cited.² Ibid.³ Ibid.

tempted a reply in French, which was very imperfect, and, apologizing, exchanged that tongue for Italian.¹ He alluded with great fervour to the "honourable opinion concerning his sincerity and word," expressed to him by her Majesty, through the mouth of her envoy. "And indeed," said he, "I have always had especial care of keeping my word. My body and service are at the commandment of the King, my lord and master, but my honour is my own, and her Majesty may be assured that I shall always have especial regard of my word to so great and famous a Queen as her Majesty."

The visit was one of preliminaries and of ceremony. Nevertheless Farnese found opportunity to impress the envoy and his companions with his sincerity of heart. He conversed much with Cecil, making particular and personal inquiries, and with appearance of deep interest, in regard to Queen Elizabeth.

"There is not a prince in the world—" he said, "reserving all question between her Majesty and my royal master—to whom I desire more to do service. So much have I heard of her perfections, that I wish earnestly that things might so fall out, as that it might be my fortune to look upon her face before my return to my own country. Yet I desire to behold her, not as a servant to him who is not able still to maintain war, or as one that feared any harm that might befall him; for in such matters my account was made long ago, to endure all which God may send. But, in truth, I am weary to behold the miserable estate of this people, fallen upon them through their own folly, and methinks that he who should do the best offices of peace would perform a *pium et sanctissimum opus*. Right glad am I that the Queen is not behind me in zeal for peace." He then complimented Cecil in regard to his father, whom he understood to be the principal mover in these negotiations.²

The young man expressed his thanks, and especially for the

¹ Cecil to Burghley, MS. last cited.

² Cecil to Burghley, $\frac{10}{20}$ March. MS. already cited.

good affection which the Duke had manifested to the Queen and in the blessed cause of peace. He was well aware that her Majesty esteemed him a prince of great honour and virtue, and that for this good work, thus auspiciously begun, no man could possibly doubt that her Majesty, like himself, was most zealously affected to bring all things to a perfect peace.

The matters discussed in this first interview were only in regard to the place to be appointed for the coming conferences, and the exchange of powers. The Queen's commissioners had expected to treat at Ostend. Alexander, on the contrary, was unable to listen to such a suggestion, as it would be utter dereliction of his master's dignity to send envoys to a city of his own, now in hostile occupation by her Majesty's forces. The place of conference, therefore, would be matter of future consideration. In respect to the exchange of powers, Alexander expressed the hope that no man would doubt as to the production on his commissioners' part of ample authority both from himself and from the King.¹

Yet it will be remembered, that, at this moment, the Duke had not only no powers from the King, but that Philip had most expressly refused to send a commission, and that he fully expected the negotiation to be superseded by the invasion, before the production of the powers should become indispensable.

And when Farnese was speaking thus fervently in favour of peace, and parading his word and his honour, the letters lay in his cabinet in that very room, in which Philip expressed his conviction that his general was already in London, that the whole realm of England was already at the mercy of a Spanish soldiery, and that the Queen, upon whose perfections Alexander had so long yearned to gaze, was a discrowned captive, entirely in her great enemy's power.

Thus ended the preliminary interview. On the following Monday, 11th March, Dr. Dale and his attendants made the best of their way back to Ostend, while young Cecil, 11 March, with a safe conduct from Champagne, set forth on a ^{1588.} little tour in Flanders.

¹ Cecil to Burghley, MS. last cited.

The journey from Ghent to Antwerp was easy, and he was agreeably surprised by the apparent prosperity of the country. At intervals of every few miles, he was refreshed with the spectacle of a gibbet well garnished with dangling freebooters, and rejoiced, therefore, in comparative security. For it seemed that the energetic bailiff of Waasland had levied a contribution upon the proprietors of the country, to be expended mainly in hanging brigands; and so well had the funds been applied, that no predatory bands could make their appearance but they were instantly pursued by soldiers, and hanged forthwith, without judge or trial. Cecil counted twelve such places of execution on his road between Ghent and Antwerp.¹

On his journey he fell in with an Italian merchant, Lanfranchi by name, of a great commercial house in Antwerp, in the days when Antwerp had commerce, and by him, on his arrival the same evening in that town, he was made an honoured guest, both for his father's sake and his Queen's. "'Tis the pleasantest city that ever I saw," said Cecil, "for situation and building, but utterly left and abandoned now by those rich merchants that were wont to frequent the place."²

His host was much interested in the peace-negotiations, and indeed, through his relations with Champagny and Andreas de Loo, had been one of the instruments by which it had been commenced. He inveighed bitterly against the Spanish captains and soldiers, to whose rapacity and ferocity he mainly ascribed the continuance of the war; and he was especially incensed with Stanley and other English renegades, who were thought fiercer haters of England than were the Spaniards themselves. Even in the desolate and abject condition of Antwerp and its neighbourhood, at that moment, the quick eye of Cecil detected the latent signs of a possible splendour. Should peace be restored, the territory once more be tilled, and the foreign merchants attracted thither again, he believed that the governor of the obedient Netherlands might live there in more magnificence than the King of Spain himself, exhausted as were his revenues by the enormous expensè of this

¹ Cecil to Burghley, $\frac{14}{24}$ March, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² *Ibid.*

protracted war. Eight hundred thousand dollars monthly, so Lanfranchi informed Cecil, were the costs of the forces on the footing then established. This, however, was probably an exaggeration, for the royal account-books showed a less formidable sum,¹ although a sufficiently large one to appal a less obstinate bigot than Philip. But what to him were the ruin of the Netherlands, the impoverishment of Spain, and the downfall of her ancient grandeur compared to the glory of establishing the Inquisition in England and Holland?

While at dinner in Lanfranchi's house, Cecil was witness to another characteristic of the times, and one which afforded proof of even more formidable freebooters abroad than those for whom the bailiff of Waasland had erected his gibbets. A canal-boat had left Antwerp for Brussels that morning, and in the vicinity of the latter city had been set upon by a detachment from the English garrison of Bergen-op-Zoom, and captured, with twelve prisoners and a freight of 60,000 florins in money. "This struck the company at the dinner-table all in a dump," said Cecil. And well it might; for the property mainly belonged to themselves, and they forthwith did their best to have the marauders waylaid on their return. But Cecil, notwithstanding his gratitude for the hospitality of Lanfranchi, sent word next day to the garrison of Bergen of

¹ "Relacion particular de lo que monta un mes de sueldo de toda la gente de este exercito asi infant^a como cab^a y entretenidos de todos naciones, artill^a armada, vituallas, y el numero de la gente que hay conforme a la ultima muestra de 29 Apr., 1588:—

Infanteria.	Hombres.	Vanderas.	Per Mes.
Española.....	8,718	89	\$62,239
Ital ^a	5,339	52	35,225
Borgog ^a	3,278	29	20,591
Irlandesa }			
Escocesa }			
Wallona.....	17,825	144	79,341
Alem ^a Alta.....	11,309	50	86,697
" Baya.....	8,616	34	51,195

Caballeria ligera.

\$650 Alem^a estandartes 38,631

Castillos.

Anversa ..	1,180.....	Per Mes. 6,508
Gande ..		
Charlemont }		

Entretenidos.

668.....	23,204
El Armada de Mar, gasto ordi-	26,400
nario per mes.....	
Artilleria.....	8,200
Vituallas, spedale, &c.....	4,384

Sumario total.

59,915 hombres, per mes, escu-	380,427
dos.....	
Sua Alteza Alessandro Farnese, per mes, 3000 escudos d' oro.	
Maese del campo gon ^l , per mes, 1000.	
Monta el gasto ordin ^a de cada me-	
hasta aqui \$454,315 per mes — 370,000	
escudos de oro." (Archivo de Simancas, MS.)	

the designs against them, and on his arrival at the place had the satisfaction of being informed by Lord Willoughby that the party had got safe home with their plunder.¹

"And well worthy they are of it," said young Robert, "considering how far they go for it."

The traveller, on leaving Antwerp, proceeded down the river to Bergen-op-Zoom, where he was hospitably entertained by that doughty old soldier Sir William Reade, and met Lord Willoughby, whom he accompanied to Brielle on a visit to the deposed elector Truchsess, then living in that neighbourhood. Cecil—who was not passion's slave—had small sympathy with the man who could lose a sovereignty for the sake of Agnes Mansfeld. "'Tis a very goodly gentleman," said he, "well fashioned, and of good speech, for which I must rather praise him than for loving a wife better than so great a fortune as he lost by her occasion."² At Brielle he was handsomely entertained by the magistrates, who had agreeable recollections of his brother Thomas, late governor of that city. Thence he proceeded by way of Delft—which, like all English travellers, he described as "the finest built town that ever he saw"—to the Hague, and thence to Fushing, and so back by sea to Ostend. He had made the most of his three weeks' tour, had seen many important towns both in the republic and in the obedient Netherlands, and had conversed with many "tall gentlemen," as he expressed himself, among the English commanders, having been especially impressed by the heroes of Sluys, Baskerville and that "proper gentleman Francis Vere."³

He was also presented by Lord Willoughby to Maurice of Nassau, and was perhaps not very benignantly received by the young prince. At that particular moment, when Leicester's deferred resignation, the rebellion of Sonoy in North Holland, founded on a fictitious allegiance to the late governor-general, the perverse determination of the Queen to treat for

¹ Cecil to Burghley, $\frac{14}{24}$ March. MS.
already cited.

² Cecil to Burghley, $\frac{26 \text{ March}}{6 \text{ April}}$, 1589
(S. P. Office MS.) ³ Ibid.

peace against the advice of all the leading statesmen of the Netherlands, and the sharp rebukes perpetually administered by her, in consequence, to the young stadholder and all his supporters, had not tended to produce the most tender feelings upon their part towards the English government, it was not surprising that the handsome soldier should look askance at the crooked little courtier, whom even the great Queen smiled at while she petted him. Cecil was very angry with Maurice.

"In my life I never saw worse behaviour," he said, "except it were in one lately come from school. There is neither outward appearance in him of any noble mind nor inward virtue."¹

Although Cecil had consumed nearly the whole month of March in his tour, he had been more profitably employed than were the royal commissioners during the same period at Ostend.

Never did statesmen know better how not to do that which they were ostensibly occupied in doing than Alexander Farnese and his agents, Champagny, Richardot, Jacob Maas, and Garnier. The first pretext by which much time was cleverly consumed was the dispute as to the place of meeting. Doctor Dale had already expressed his desire for Ostend as the place of colloquy. "'Tis a very slow old gentleman,"² this Doctor Dale," said Alexander; "he was here in the time of Madam my mother, and has also been ambassador at Vienna. I have received him and his attendants with great courtesy, and held out great hopes of peace. We had conversations about the place of meeting. He wishes Ostend: I object. The first conference will probably be at some point between that place and Newport."³

The next opportunity for discussion and delay was afforded by the question of powers. And it must be ever borne in mind that Alexander was daily expecting the arrival of the invading fleets and armies of Spain, and was holding himself

¹ Cecil to Burghley, ¹⁹/₂₀ March, 1588.
(S. P. Office MS.)

Philip II., 20 March, 1588. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

² Ibid.

³ "Viejo y pesado." Parma to

in readiness to place himself at their head for the conquest of England. This was, of course, so strenuously denied by himself and those under his influence, that Queen Elizabeth implicitly believed him, Burghley was lost in doubt, and even the astute Walsingham began to distrust his own senses. So much strength does a falsehood acquire in determined and skilful hands.

"As to the commissions, it will be absolutely necessary for your Majesty to send them," wrote Alexander at the moment when he was receiving the English envoy at Ghent, "*for—unless the Armada arrive soon—it will be indispensable for me to have them, in order to keep the negotiation alive. Of course they will never broach the principal matters without exhibition of powers. Richardot is aware of the secret which your Majesty confided to me, namely, that the negotiations are only intended to deceive the Queen and to gain time for the fleet; but the powers must be sent in order that we may be able to produce them, although your secret intentions will be obeyed.*"¹

The Duke commented, however, on the extreme difficulty of carrying out the plan, as originally proposed. "The conquest of England would have been difficult," he said, "even although the country had been taken by surprise. Now they are strong and armed; we are comparatively weak. The danger and the doubt are great; and the English deputies, I think, are really desirous of peace. Nevertheless I am at your Majesty's disposition—life and all—and probably, *before the answer arrives to this letter*, the fleet will have arrived, and *I shall have undertaken the passage to England.*"²

After three weeks had thus adroitly been frittered away, the English commissioners became somewhat impatient, and despatched Doctor Rogers to the Duke at Ghent. This was extremely obliging upon their part, for if Valentine Dale were a "slow old gentleman," he was keen, caustic, and rapid, as compared to John Rogers. A formalist and a pedant, a man of red tape and routine, full of precedents and declamatory

¹ Parma to Philip II, 20 March, 1588. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.) ² *Ibid.*

commonplaces which he mistook for eloquence, honest as daylight and tedious as a king, he was just the time-consumer for Alexander's purpose. The wily Italian listened with profound attention to the wise saws in which the excellent diplomatist revelled, and his fine eyes often filled with tears at the Doctor's rhetoric.

Three interviews—each three mortal hours long—did the two indulge in at Ghent, and never was high commissioner better satisfied with himself than was John Rogers upon those occasions. He carried every point; he convinced, he softened, he captivated the great Duke; he turned the great Duke round his finger. The great Duke smiled, or wept, or fell into his arms, by turns. Alexander's military exploits had rung through the world, his genius for diplomacy and statesmanship had never been disputed; but his talents as a light comedian were, in these interviews, for the first time fully revealed.

On the 26th March the learned Doctor made his first bow and performed his first flourish of compliments at Ghent.

^{26 March} "I assure your Majesty," said he, "his Highness
^{5 April}
1588. followed my compliments of entertainment with so much honour, as that—his Highness or I, speaking of the Queen of England—he never did less than uncover his head; not covering the same, unless I was covered also."¹ And after these salutations had at last been got through with, thus spake the Doctor of Laws to the Duke of Parma:—

"Almighty God, the light of lights, be pleased to enlighten the understanding of your Alteza, and to direct the same to his glory, to the uniting of both their Majesties and the finishing of these most bloody wars, whereby these countries, being in the highest degree of misery desolate, lie as it were prostrate before the wrathful presence of the most mighty God, most lamentably beseeching his Divine Majesty to withdraw his scourge of war from them, and to move the hearts of princes to restore them unto peace, whereby they might attain

¹ Doctor Rogers to the Queen, $\frac{1}{11}$ April, 1588. (S. P. Office MSS.)

unto their ancient flower and dignity. Into the hands of your Alteza are now the lives of many thousands, the destruction of cities, towns, and countries, which to put to the fortune of war how perilous it were, I pray consider. Think ye, ye see the mothers *left alive* tendering their offspring in your presence," "*nam matribus detestata bella*," continued the orator. "Think also of others of all sexes, ages, and conditions, on their knees before your Alteza, most humbly praying and crying most dolorously to spare their lives, and save their property from the ensanguined scourge of the insane soldiers," and so on, and so on.¹

Now Philip II. was slow in resolving, slower in action. The ponderous three-deckers of Biscay were notoriously the dullest sailers ever known, nor were the fettered slaves who rowed the great galleys of Portugal or of Andalusia very brisk in their movements; and yet the King might have found time to marshal his ideas and his squadrons, and the Armada had leisure to circumnavigate the globe and invade England afterwards, if a succession of John Rogerses could have entertained his Highness with compliments while the preparations were making.

But Alexander—at the very outset of the Doctor's eloquence—found it difficult to suppress his feelings. "I can assure your Majesty," said Rogers, "that his eyes—he has a very large eye—were moistened. Sometimes they were thrown upward to heaven, sometimes they were fixed full upon me, sometimes they were cast downward, well declaring how his heart was affected."²

Honest John even thought it necessary to mitigate the effect of his rhetoric, and to assure his Highness that it was, after all, only he, Doctor Rogers, and not the minister plenipotentiary of the Queen's most serene Majesty, who was exciting all this emotion.

"At this part of my speech," said he, "I prayed his Highness not to be troubled,³ for that the same *only proceeded from*

¹ Doctor Rogers to the Queen, MS. last cited. ² Ibid. ³ "Scontentarsi," Ibid.

Doctor Rogers, who, it might please him to know, was so much moved with the pitiful case of these countries, as also that which of war was sure to ensue, that I wished, if my body were full of rivers of blood, the same to be poured forth to satisfy any that were blood-thirsty, so there might an assured peace follow.”¹

His Highness, at any rate, manifesting no wish to drink of such sanguinary streams—even had the Doctor’s body contained them—*Rogers* became calmer. He then descended from rhetoric to jurisprudence and casuistry, and argued at intolerable length the propriety of commencing the conferences at Ostend, and of exhibiting mutually the commissions.

It is quite unnecessary to follow him as closely as did *Farnese*. When he had finished the first part of his oration, however, and was “addressing himself to the second point,” *Alexander* at last interrupted the torrent of his eloquence.

“He said that my divisions and subdivisions,” wrote the Doctor, “were perfectly in his remembrance, and that he would first answer the first point, and afterwards give audience to the second, and answer the same accordingly.”

Accordingly *Alexander* put on his hat, and begged the envoy also to be covered. Then, “with great gravity, as one inwardly much moved,” the Duke took up his part in the dialogue.

“*Signor Ruggieri*,” said he, “you have propounded unto me speeches of two sorts: the one proceeds from Doctor *Ruggieri*, the other from the lord ambassador of the most serene Queen of England. Touching the first, I do give you my hearty thanks for your godly speeches, assuring you that though, by reason I have always followed the wars, I cannot be ignorant of the calamities by you alleged, yet you have so truly represented the same before mine eyes as to effectuate in me at this instant, not only the confirmation of mine own disposition to have peace, but also an assurance that this treaty shall take good and speedy end, seeing that it hath pleased God to raise up such a good instrument as you are.”²

¹ *Rogers* to the Queen, MS. before cited.

² *Ibid.*

"Many are the causes," continued the Duke, "which, besides my disposition, move me to peace. My father and mother are dead, my son is a young prince, my house has truly need of my presence. I am not ignorant how ticklish a thing is the fortune of war, which—how victorious soever I have been—may in one moment not only deface the same, but also deprive me of my life. The King, my master, is now stricken in years, his children are young, his dominions in trouble. His desire is to live, and to leave his posterity in quietness. The glory of God, the honor of both their Majesties, and the good of these countries, with the stay of the effusion of Christian blood, and divers other like reasons, *force him to peace.*"¹

Thus spoke Alexander, like an honest Christian gentleman, avowing the most equitable and pacific dispositions on the part of his master and himself. Yet at that moment he knew that the Armada was about to sail, that his own nights and days were passed in active preparations for war, and that no earthly power could move Philip by one hair's-breadth from his purpose to conquer England that summer.²

It would be superfluous to follow the Duke or the Doctor through their long dialogue on the place of conference, and the commissions. Alexander considered it "infamy" on his name if he should send envoys to a place of his master's held by the enemy. He was also of opinion that it was unheard of to exhibit commissions previous to a preliminary colloquy.

Both propositions were strenuously contested by Rogers. In regard to the second point in particular, he showed triumphantly, by citations from the "Polonians, Prussians, and Lithuanians," that commissions ought to be previously exhibited.³ But it was not probable that even the Doctor's learning and logic would persuade Alexander to produce his

¹ Rogers to the Queen, MS. last cited.

² We have sufficiently proved the good faith of the Queen on entering upon these negotiations. Alexander himself felt as sure of her sincerity as he did of his master's duplicity.

"I believe that she desires peace earnestly," said he to Philip, "on account of her fear of expense." Parma to Philip II. 31 Jan. 1588. (Arch. de Simancas. MS.)

³ Rogers to the Queen, MS. already cited.

commission, because, unfortunately, he had no commission to produce. A comfortable argument on the subject, however, would, none the less, consume time.

Three hours of this work brought them, exhausted and hungry, to the hour of noon and of dinner. Alexander, with profuse and smiling thanks for the envoy's plain dealing and eloquence, assured him that there would have been peace long ago "had Doctor Rogers always been the instrument," and regretted that he was himself not learned enough to deal creditably with him. He would, however, send Richardot to bear him company at table, and chop logic with him afterwards.

Next day, at the same hour, the Duke and Doctor had another encounter. So soon as the envoy made his appearance, he found himself "embraced most cheerfully and familiarly by his Alteza," who, then entering at once into business, asked as to the Doctor's second point.¹

The Doctor answered with great alacrity.

"Certain expressions have been reported to her Majesty," said he, "as coming both from your Highness and from Richardot, hinting at a possible attempt by the King of Spain's forces against the Queen. Her Majesty, gathering that you are going about belike to terrify her, commands me to inform you very clearly and very expressly that she does not deal so weakly in her government, nor so improvidently, but that she is provided for anything that might be attempted against her by the King, and as able to offend him as he her Majesty."²

Alexander—with a sad countenance, as much offended, his eyes declaring discontentment—asked who had made such a report.

"Upon the honour of a gentleman," said he, "whoever has said this has much abused me, and evil acquitted himself. They who know me best are aware that it is not my manner to let any word pass my lips that might offend any prince." Then, speaking most solemnly, he added, "I declare *really* and *truly* (which two words he said in Spanish), that I

¹ Rogers to the Queen, MS. last cited.

² Ibid.

*know not of any intention of the King of Spain against her Majesty or her realm."*¹

At that moment the earth did not open—year of portents though it was—and the Doctor, "singularly rejoicing" at this authentic information from the highest source, proceeded cheerfully with the conversation.

"I hold myself," he exclaimed, "the man most satisfied in the world, because I may now write to her Majesty that I have heard your Highness upon your honour use these words."

"Upon my honour, it is true," repeated the Duke; "for so honourably do I think of her Majesty, as that, after the King, my master, I would honour and serve her before any prince in Christendom." He added many earnest asseverations of similar import.

"I do not deny, however," continued Alexander, "that I have heard of certain ships having been armed by the King against that Draak"—he pronounced the "a" in Drake's name very broadly, or *Doricè*—"who has committed so many outrages; but I repeat that I *have never heard of any design* against her Majesty or against England."²

The Duke then manifested much anxiety to know by whom he had been so misrepresented. "There has been no one with me but Dr. Dale," said he, "and I marvel that he should thus wantonly have injured me."

"Dr. Dale," replied Rogers, "is a man of honour, of good years, learned, and well experienced; but perhaps he unfortunately misapprehended some of your Alteza's words, and thought himself bound by his allegiance strictly to report them to her Majesty."

"I grieve that I should be misrepresented and injured," answered Farnese, "in a manner so important to my honour. Nevertheless, knowing the virtues with which her Majesty is endued, I assure myself that the protestations I am now making will entirely satisfy her."

He then expressed the fervent hope that the holy work of

¹ "Realmente y verdaderamente." (Rogers to the Queen, MS. last cited.)

² Ibid.

negotiation now commencing would result in a renewal of the ancient friendship between the Houses of Burgundy and of England, asserting that "there had never been so favourable a time as the present."

Under former governments of the Netherlands there had been many mistakes and misunderstandings.

"The Duke of Alva," said he, "has learned by this time, before the judgment-seat of God, how he discharged his functions, succeeding as he did my mother, the Duchess of Parma, who left the Provinces in so flourishing a condition. Of this, however, I will say no more, because of a feud between the Houses of Farnese and of Alva. As for Requesens, he was a good fellow, but didn't understand his business. Don John of Austria again, whose soul I doubt not is in heaven, was young and poor, and disappointed in all his designs; but God has never offered so great a hope of assured peace as might now be accomplished by her Majesty."¹

Finding the Duke in so fervent and favourable a state of mind, the envoy renewed his demand that at least the *first* meeting of the commissioners might be held at Ostend.

"Her Majesty finds herself so touched in honour upon this point, that if it be not conceded—as I doubt not it will be, seeing the singular forwardness of your Highness"—said the artful Doctor with a smile,² "we are no less than commanded to return to her Majesty's presence."

"I sent Richardot to you yesterday," said Alexander; "did he not content you?"

"Your Highness, no," replied Rogers. "Moreover her Majesty sent me to your Alteza, and not to Richardot. And the matter is of such importance that I pray you to add to all your graces and favours heaped upon me, this one of sending your commissioners to Ostend."

His Highness could hold out no longer; but suddenly catching the Doctor in his arms, and hugging him "in most honourable and amiable manner," he cried—³

¹ Rogers to the Queen, MS, last cited.

² "I spake it souriant," &c. Ibid.

³ Ibid.

"Be contented, be cheerful, my lord ambassador. You shall be satisfied upon this point also."

"And never did envoy depart," cried the lord ambassador, when he could get his breath, "more bound to you, and more resolute to speak honour of your Highness than I do."

"To-morrow we will ride together towards Bruges," said the Duke, in conclusion. "Till then farewell."

Upon this he again heartily embraced the envoy, and the friends parted for the day.

Next morning, 28th March, the Duke, who was on his way to Bruges and Sluys to look after his gun-boats, and other
28 March
7 April
1588. naval and military preparations, set forth on horseback, accompanied by the Marquis del Vasto, and, for part of the way, by Rogers.

They conversed on the general topics of the approaching negotiations; the Duke expressing the opinion that the treaty of peace would be made short work with, for it only needed to renew the old ones between the Houses of England and Burgundy. As for the Hollanders and Zeelanders, and their accomplices, he thought there would be no cause of stay on their account; and in regard to the cautionary towns he felt sure that her Majesty had never had any intention of appropriating them to herself, and would willingly surrender them to the King.

Rogers thought it a good opportunity to put in a word for the Dutchmen, who certainly would not have thanked him for his assistance at that moment.

"Not to give offence to your Highness," he said, "if the Hollanders and Zeelanders, with their confederates, like to come into this treaty, surely your Highness would not object?"

Alexander, who had been riding along quietly during this conversation, with his right hand on his hip, now threw out his arm energetically.

"Let them come into it, let them treat, let them conclude,"¹ he exclaimed, "in the name of Almighty God! I

¹ "Entrino, trattino, concludino." Rogers to the Queen, MS. last cited.

have always been well disposed to peace, and am now more so than ever. I could even, with the loss of my life, be content to have peace made at this time."

Nothing more, worthy of commemoration, occurred during this concluding interview ; and the envoy took his leave at Bruges, and returned to Ostend.¹

I have furnished the reader with a minute account of these conversations, drawn entirely from the original records, not so much because the interviews were in themselves of vital importance, but because they afford a living and breathing example—better than a thousand homilies—of the easy victory which diplomatic or royal mendacity may always obtain over innocence and credulity.

Certainly never was envoy more thoroughly beguiled than the excellent John upon this occasion. Wiser than a serpent, as he imagined himself to be, more harmless than a dove, as Alexander found him, he could not sufficiently congratulate himself upon the triumphs of his eloquence and his adroitness ; and despatched most glowing accounts of his proceedings to the Queen.

His ardour was somewhat damped, however, at receiving a message from her Majesty in reply, which was anything but benignant. His eloquence was not commended ; and even his preamble, with its touching allusion to the live mothers tendering their offspring—the passage which had brought the tears into the large eyes of Alexander—was coldly and cruelly censured.

"Her Majesty can in no sort like such speeches"—so ran the return-despatch—"in which she is made to beg for peace. The King of Spain standeth in as great need of peace as herself ; and she doth greatly mislike the preamble of Dr. Rogers in his address to the Duke at Ghent, *finding it, in very truth, quite fond and vain*. I am commanded by a particular letter to let him understand how much her Majesty is offended with him."²

¹ Rogers to the Queen, MS. last cited.

² Lords of Council to Earl of Derby

and Lord Cobham, $\frac{11}{21}$ April, 1588
(S. P. Office MS.)

Alexander, on his part, informed his royal master of these interviews, in which there had been so much effusion of sentiment, in very brief fashion.

"Dr. Rogers, one of the Queen's commissioners, has been here," he said, "urging me with all his might to let all your Majesty's deputies go, if only for one hour, to Ostend. I refused, saying, I would rather they should go to England than into a city of your Majesty held by English troops. I told him it ought to be satisfactory that I had offered the Queen, as a lady, her choice of any place in the Provinces, or on neutral ground. Rogers expressed regret for all the bloodshed and other consequences if the negotiations should fall through for so trifling a cause; the more so as in return for this little compliment to the Queen she would not only restore to your Majesty everything that she holds in the Netherlands, but would assist you to recover the part which remains obstinate.¹ To quiet him and to consume time, I have promised that President Richardot shall go and try to satisfy them. *Thus two or three weeks more will be wasted.* But at last the time will come for exhibiting the powers. They are very anxious to see mine; and when at last they find I have none, I fear that they will break off the negotiations."²

Could the Queen have been informed of this voluntary offer on the part of her envoy to give up the cautionary towns, and to assist in reducing the rebellion, she might have used stronger language of rebuke. It is quite possible, however, that Farnese—not so attentively following the Doctor's eloquence as he had appeared to do—had somewhat inaccurately reported the conversations, which, after all, he knew to be of no consequence whatever, except as time-consumers. For Elizabeth, desirous of peace as she was, and trusting to Farnese's sincerity as she was disposed to do, was more sensitive than ever as to her dignity.

¹ "Por esta poca honra que se hara a la Reyna ella non solo restituyre a V. Mag^d todo lo que tiene destos estados mas ayudara a cobrar la parte que

quedara obstinada." Parma to Philip II., 16 Apr., 1588. (Archivo de Simancas, MS.)

² Ibid.

"We charge you all," she wrote with her own hand to the commissioners, "that no word be overslipt by them, that may touch our honour and greatness, that be not answered with good sharp words. I am a king that will be ever known not to fear any but God."¹

It would have been better, however, had the Queen more thoroughly understood that the day for scolding had quite gone by, and that something sharper than the sharpest words would soon be wanted to protect England and herself from impending doom. For there was something almost gigantic in the frivolities with which weeks and months of such precious time were now squandered. Plenary powers—"comission bastantissima"—from his sovereign had been announced by Alexander as in his possession; although the reader has seen that he had no such powers at all. The mission of Rogers had quieted the envoys at Ostend for a time, and they waited quietly for the visit of Richardot to Ostend, into which the promised meeting of all the Spanish commissioners in that city had dwindled. Meantime there was an exchange of the most friendly amenities between the English and their mortal enemies. Hardly a day passed that La Motte, or Renty, or Aremberg, did not send Lord Derby, or Cobham, or Robert Cecil, a hare, or a pheasant, or a cast of hawks,² and they in return sent barrel upon barrel of Ostend oysters, five or six hundred at a time.³ The Englishmen, too, had it in their power to gratify Alexander himself with English greyhounds, for which he had a special liking. "You would wonder," wrote Cecil to his father, "how fond he is of English dogs."⁴ There was also much good preaching among other occupations, at Ostend. "My Lord of Derby's two chaplains," said Cecil, "have seasoned this town better with sermons than it had been before for a year's space."⁵ But all this did not expedite the negotiations, nor did the Duke

¹ Queen to the Commissioners, $\frac{8}{18}$ April, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Cecil to Burghley, $\frac{5}{15}$ April, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

manifest so much anxiety for colloquies as for greyhounds. So, in an unlucky hour for himself, another "fond and vain" old gentleman—James Croft, the comptroller, who had already figured, not much to his credit, in the secret negotiations between the Brussels and English courts—betook himself, unauthorized and alone, to the Duke at Bruges. Here he had an interview very similar in character to that in which John Rogers had been indulged, declared to Farnese that the Queen was most anxious for peace, and invited him to send a secret envoy to England, who would instantly have ocular demonstration of the fact. Croft returned as triumphantly as the excellent Doctor had done; averring that there was no doubt as to the immediate conclusion of a treaty. His grounds of belief were very similar to those upon which Rogers had founded his faith. "'Tis a weak old man of seventy," said Parma, "with very little sagacity. I am inclined to think that his colleagues are taking him in, that they may the better deceive us.¹ I will see that they do nothing of the kind." But the movement was purely one of the comptroller's own inspiration; for Sir James had a singular facility for getting himself into trouble, and for making confusion. Already, when he had been scarcely a day in Ostend, he had insulted the governor of the place, Sir John Conway, had given him the lie in the hearing of many of his own soldiers, had gone about telling all the world that he had express authority from her Majesty to send him home in disgrace, and that the Queen had called him a fool, and quite unfit for his post.² And as if this had not been mischief-making enough, in addition to the absurd De Loo and Bodman negotiations of the previous year, in which he had been the principal actor, he had crowned his absurdities by this secret and officious visit to Ghent. The Queen, naturally very indignant at this conduct, reprehended him severely, and ordered him back to

¹ "Como muestra poca sagacidad dexa de dar recelo de que le engañan a el para mas engañar," &c. Parma to Philip II., 13 May, 1588. (Arch.

de Simancas, MS.)

² Queen to Derby and Cobham, $\frac{17}{x}$ April, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

England.¹ The comptroller was wretched. He expressed his readiness to obey her commands, but nevertheless implored his dread sovereign to take merciful consideration of the manifold misfortunes, ruin, and utter undoing, which thereby should fall upon him and his unfortunate family. All this he protested he would nothing esteem if it tended to her Majesty's pleasure or service, "but seeing it should effectuate nothing but to bring the aged carcase of her poor vassal to present decay, he implored compassion upon his hoary hairs, and promised to repair the error of his former proceedings. He avowed that he would not have ventured to disobey for a moment her orders to return, but "that his aged and feeble limbs did not retain sufficient force, without present death, to comply with her commandment."² And with that he took to his bed, and remained there until the Queen was graciously pleased to grant him her pardon.

At last, early in May—instead of the visit of Richardot—there was a preliminary meeting of all the commissioners in tents on the sands, within a cannon-shot of Ostend, and between that place and Newport. It was a showy and ceremonious interview, in which no business was transacted. The commissioners of Philip were attended by a body of one hundred and fifty light horse, and by three hundred private gentlemen in magnificent costume. La Motte also came from Newport with one thousand Walloon cavalry, while the English commissioners on their part were escorted from Ostend by an imposing array of English and Dutch troops.³ As the territory was Spanish, the dignity of the King was supposed to be preserved, and Alexander, who had promised Dr. Rogers that the first interview should take place within Ostend itself, thought it necessary to apologize to his sovereign for so nearly keeping his word as to send the envoys within cannon-shot of the town. "The English com-

¹ Queen to the Commissioners for the reprehension of Sir James Croft, in Lord Burghley's handwriting, $\frac{8}{18}$ May, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Croft to the Queen, 28 May, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Parma to Philip II. 13 May, 1588. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

missioners," said he, "begged with so much submission for this concession, that I thought it as well to grant it."¹

The Spanish envoys were despatched by the Duke of Parma, well provided with full powers for himself, which were not desired by the English government, but unfurnished with a commission from Philip, which had been pronounced indispensable.² There was, therefore, much prancing of cavalry, flourishing of trumpets, and eating of oysters, at the first conference, but not one stroke of business. As the English envoys had now been three whole months in Ostend, and as this was the first occasion on which they had been brought face to face with the Spanish commissioners, it must be confessed that the tactics of Farnese had been masterly. Had the haste in the dock-yards of Lisbon and Cadiz been at all equal to the magnificent procrastination in the council-chambers of Bruges and Ghent, Medina Sidonia might already have been in the Thames.

But although little ostensible business was performed, there was one man who had always an eye to his work. The same servant in plain livery, who had accompanied Secretary Garnier, on his first visit to the English commissioners at Ostend, had now come thither again, accompanied by a fellow-lackey. While the complimentary dinner, offered in the name of the absent Farnese to the Queen's representatives, was going forward, the two menials strayed off together to the downs, for the purpose of rabbit-shooting.³ The one of them was the same engineer who had already, on the former occasion, taken a complete survey of the fortifications of Ostend; the other was no less a personage than the Duke of Parma himself. The pair now made a thorough examination of the town and its neighbourhood, and, having finished their reconnoitring, made the best of their way back to Bruges.⁴ As it was then one of Alexander's favourite objects to reduce

¹ "Suplicado con grande submicion que se diessse esta satisfacion a la Reyna," &c. Parma to Philip II. (MS. last cited.)

² Ibid.

³ Parma to Philip II. 13 May, 1588 (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

⁴ Ibid.

the city of Ostend, at the earliest possible moment, it must be allowed that this preliminary conference was not so barren to himself as it was to the commissioners. Philip, when informed of this manœuvre, was naturally gratified at such masterly duplicity, while he gently rebuked his nephew for exposing his valuable life; and certainly it would have been an inglorious termination to the Duke's splendid career, had he been hanged as a spy within the trenches of Ostend. With the other details of this first diplomatic colloquy Philip was delighted. "I see you understand me thoroughly," he said. "Keep the negotiation alive till my Armada appears, and then carry out my determination, and replant the Catholic religion on the soil of England."¹

The Queen was not in such high spirits. She was losing her temper very fast, as she became more and more convinced that she had been trifled with. No powers had been yet exhibited, no permanent place of conference fixed upon, and the cessation of arms demanded by her commissioners for England, Spain, and all the Netherlands, was absolutely refused.² She desired her commissioners to inform the Duke of Parma that it greatly touched his honour—as both before their coming and afterwards, he had assured her that he had *comision bastantissima* from his sovereign—to clear himself at once from the imputation of insincerity. "Let not the Duke think," she wrote with her own hand, "that we would so long time endure these many frivolous and unkindly dealings, but that we desire all the world to know our desire of a kingly peace, and that we will endure no more the like, nor any, but will return you from your charge."³

Accordingly—by her Majesty's special command—Dr. Dale made another visit to Bruges, to discover, once for all, whether there was a commission from Philip or not, and, if so, to see it with his own eyes. On the 7th May he had an interview

¹ Philip II. to Parma, 21 June, 1588. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

² Parma to Philip II. 13 May, 1588. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

³ Queen to the Commissioners, 20 April, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)
10 May

with the Duke. After thanking his Highness for the honourable and stately manner in which the conferences ⁷/₁₇ May, 1588. had been inaugurated near Ostend, Dale laid very plainly before him her Majesty's complaints of the tergiversations and equivocations concerning the commission, which had now lasted three months long.¹

In answer, Alexander made a complimentary harangue, confining himself entirely to the first part of the envoy's address, and assuring him in redundant phraseology, that he should hold himself very guilty before the world, if he had not surrounded the first colloquy between the plenipotentiaries of two such mighty princes, with as much pomp as the circumstances of time and place would allow. After this superfluous rhetoric had been poured forth, he calmly dismissed the topic which Dr. Dale had come all the way from Ostend to discuss, by carelessly observing that President Richardot would confer with him on the subject of the commission.²

"But," said the envoy, "'tis no matter of conference or dispute. I desire simply to see the commission."

"Richardot and Champagny shall deal with you in the afternoon," repeated Alexander; and, with this reply, the Doctor was fain to be contented.

Dale then alluded to the point of cessation of arms.

"Although," said he, "the Queen might justly require that the cessation should be general for all the King's dominion, yet in order not to stand on precise points, she is content that it should extend no further than to the towns of Flushing, Briel, Ostend, and Bergen-op-Zoom."

"To this he said nothing," wrote the envoy, "and so I went no further."

In the afternoon Dale had conference with Champagny and Richardot. As usual, Champagny was bound hand and foot by the gout, but was as quick-witted and disputatious as ever. Again Dale made an earnest harangue, proving satisfactorily

¹ Dale to the Queen, ⁹/₁₉ May, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Dale to the Queen. (MS. last cited.)

—as if any proof were necessary on such a point—that a commission from Philip ought to be produced, and that a commission had been promised, over and over again.¹

After a pause, both the representatives of Parma began to wrangle with the envoy in very insolent fashion. “Richardot is always their mouth-piece;” said Dale, “only Champagne choppeth in at every word, and would do so likewise in ours if we would suffer it.”²

“We shall never have done with these impertinent demands,” said the President. “You ought to be satisfied with the Duke’s promise of ratification contained in his commission. We confess what you say concerning the former requisitions and promises to be true, but when will you have done? Have we not showed it to Mr. Croft, one of your own colleagues? And if we show it you now, another may come to-morrow, and so we shall never have an end.”

“The delays come from yourselves,” roundly replied the Englishman, “for you refuse to do what in reason and law you are bound to do. And the more demands the more *mora aut potius culpa* in you. You, of all men, have least cause to hold such language, who so confidently and even disdainfully answered our demand for the commission, in Mr. Cecil’s presence, and promised to show a perfect one at the very first meeting. As for Mr. Comptroller Croft, he came hither without the command of her Majesty and without the knowledge of his colleagues.”

Richardot then began to insinuate that, as Croft had come without authority, so—for aught they could tell—might Dale also. But Champagne here interrupted, protested that the president was going too far, and begged him to show the commission without further argument.³

Upon this Richardot pulled out the commission from under his gown, and placed it in Dr. Dale’s hands!⁴

It was dated 17th April, 1588, signed and sealed by the

¹ Dale to the Queen, MS. last cited.

² Commissioners to Privy Council, 7 June, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Dale to the Queen, $\frac{9}{19}$ May, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Ibid.

King, and written in French, and was to the effect, that as there had been differences between her Majesty and himself, as her Majesty had sent ambassadors into the Netherlands, as the Duke of Parma had entered into treaty with her Majesty, therefore the King authorised the Duke to appoint commissioners to treat, conclude, and determine all controversies and misunderstandings, confirmed any such appointments already made, and promised to ratify all that might be done by them in the premises.¹

Dr. Dale expressed his satisfaction with the tenor of this document, and begged to be furnished with a copy of it, but this was peremptorily refused.² There was then a long conversation—ending, as usual, in nothing—on the two other points, the place for the conferences, namely, and the cessation of arms.

Next morning Dale, in taking leave of the Duke of Parma, expressed the gratification which he felt, and which her Majesty was sure to feel at the production of the commission. It was now proved, said the envoy, that the King was as earnestly in favour of peace as the Duke was himself.

Dale then returned, well satisfied, to Ostend.

In truth the commission had arrived just in time. "Had I not received it soon enough to produce it then," said Alexander, "the Queen would have broken off the negotiations. So I ordered Richardot, who is quite aware of your Majesty's secret intentions, from which we shall not swerve one jot, to show it privately to Croft, and afterwards to Dr. Dale, but without allowing a copy of it to be taken."³

"You have done very well," replied Philip, "but that commission is, *on no account, to be used, except for show*. You know my mind thoroughly."⁴

¹ Dale to the Queen, MS. last cited.

² Ibid.

³ Parma to Philip II. 8 June, 1588. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

⁴ Philip to Parma, 21 June, 1588. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

The King, when he at last sent the power on the 13th May, 1588, had

observed to Farnese—"I don't think that there will be any trouble on account of your having no commission from me. Nevertheless, in order to dispel their doubts and to remove all suspicion, I have ordered for the nonce one to be sent in French. This, as I have already stated, is not to be used

Thus three months had been consumed, and at last one indispensable preliminary to any negotiation had, in appearance, been performed. Full powers on both sides had been exhibited. When the Queen of England gave the Earl of Derby and his colleagues commission to treat with the King's envoys, and pledged herself beforehand to ratify all their proceedings, she meant to perform the promise to which she had affixed her royal name and seal. She could not know that the Spanish monarch was deliberately putting *his* name to a lie, and chuckling in secret over the credulity of his English sister, who was willing to take his word and his bond. Of a certainty the English were no match for southern diplomacy.

But Elizabeth was now more impatient than ever that the other two preliminaries should be settled, the place of conferences, and the armistice.

"Be plain with the Duke," she wrote to her envoys, "that we have tolerated so many weeks in tarrying a commission, that I will never endure more delays. Let him know he deals with a prince who prizes her honour more than her life. Make yourselves such as stand of your reputations."¹

Sharp words, but not sharp enough to prevent a further delay of a month; for it was not till the 6th June that the commissioners at last came together at Bourbourg,² 6 June, that "miserable little hole," on the coast between 1588.

for the purpose of concluding or agreeing to anything, in any case whatever, but only for the sake of keeping the negotiation alive, in order to enable us the better to execute our armed enterprise; and so I again charge it upon you, with a renewed prohibition of any thing in a contrary sense, referring you always to my letter of 24th April, and to my orders so often given, which you are to fulfil exactly without departing one jot therefrom." "Para sacarlos de duda, y quitarlos toda sospecha, he mandado un poder por la via en frances, del qual, como entonces, os lo adverti y declare, no se ha de usar para asentar ni concluir por ningun caso, cosa alguna, sino solo que acude la platica para poder executar

mejor lo de las armas y empresa, y asi os lo torno a encargar con nueva prohibicion de lo contrario, remitiendome a la carta que en esta materia se os escribio por esta via a lo 24 April, que es la orden que aveys de cumplir puntualmente sin apartaros della," &c. Philip II. to Parma, 13 May, 1588. (Archivo de Simancas, MS.)

¹ Queen's Minute to the Commissioners, $\frac{13}{23}$ May, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Parma to Philip, 8 June, 1588. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.) Dale to Walsingham, $\frac{19 \text{ May}}{8 \text{ June}}$, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.) Commissioners to the Queen. (Ibid.)

Ostend and Newport, against which Garnier had warned them. And now there was ample opportunity to wrangle at full length on the next preliminary, the cessation of arms. It would be superfluous to follow the altercations step by step—for negotiations there were none—and it is only for the sake of exhibiting at full length the infamy of diplomacy, when diplomacy is unaccompanied by honesty, that we are hanging up this series of pictures at all. Those bloodless encounters between credulity and vanity upon one side, and gigantic fraud on the other, near those very sands of Newport, and in sight of the Northern Ocean, where, before long, the most terrible battles, both by land and sea, which the age had yet witnessed, were to occur, are quite as full of instruction and moral as the most sanguinary combats ever waged.

At last the commissioners exchanged copies of their respective powers. After four months of waiting and wrangling,

27 May
6 June
1588.

so much had been achieved—a show of commissions and a selection of the place for conference. And now began the long debate about the cessation of arms. The English claimed an armistice for the whole dominion of Philip and Elizabeth respectively, during the term of negotiation, and for twenty days after. The Spanish would grant only a temporary truce, terminable at six days' notice, and that only for the four cautionary towns of Holland held by the Queen. Thus Philip would be free to invade England at his leisure out of the obedient Netherlands or Spain. This was inadmissible, of course, but a week was spent at the outset in reducing the terms to writing; and when the Duke's propositions were at last produced in the French tongue, they were refused by the Queen's commissioners, who required that the documents should be in Latin. Great was the triumph of Dr. Dale, when, after another interval, he found their Latin full of barbarisms and blunders, at which a school-boy would have blushed.¹ The King's commissioners, however, while halting in their syntax, had kept steadily to their point.

¹ Dale to Walsingham, 21 June, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

"You promised a general cessation of arms at our coming," said Dale, at a conference on the $\frac{2}{12}$ June, "and now ye have lingered five times twenty days, and nothing done at all. The world may see the delays come of you and not of us, and that ye are not so desirous of peace as ye pretend."¹

"But as for your invasion of England," stoutly observed the Earl of Derby, "ye shall find it hot coming thither. England was never so ready in any former age, neither by sea nor by land; but we would show your unreasonableness in proposing a cessation of arms by which ye would bind her Majesty to forbear touching all the Low Countries, and yet leave yourselves at liberty to invade England."²

While they were thus disputing, Secretary Garnier rushed into the room, looking very much frightened, and announced that Lord Henry Seymour's fleet of thirty-two ships of war was riding off Gravelines, and that he had sent two men on shore who were now waiting in the ante-chamber.

The men being accordingly admitted, handed letters to the English commissioners from Lord Henry, in which he begged to be informed in what terms they were standing, and whether they needed his assistance or countenance in the cause in which they were engaged. The envoys found his presence very "comfortable," as it showed the Spanish commissioners that her Majesty was so well provided as to make a cessation of arms less necessary to her than it was to the King. They therefore sent their thanks to the Lord Admiral, begging him to cruise for a time off Dunkirk and its neighbourhood, that both their enemies and their friends might have a sight of the English ships.³

Great was the panic all along the coast at this unexpected demonstration. The King's commissioners got into their coaches, and drove down to the coast to look at the fleet, and—so soon as they appeared—were received with such a thundering cannonade an hour long, by way of salute, as to

¹ Commissioners to Privy Council, $\frac{3}{13}$ June, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

convince them, in the opinion of the English envoys, that the Queen had no cause to be afraid of any enemies afloat or ashore.¹

But these noisy arguments were not much more effective than the interchange of diplomatic broadsides which they had for a moment superseded. The day had gone by for blank cartridges and empty protocols. Nevertheless Lord Henry's harmless thunder was answered, the next day, by a "Quintuplication" in worse Latin than ever, presented to Dr. Dale and his colleagues by Richardot and Champagny, on the subject of the armistice. And then there was a return quintuplication, in choice Latin, by the classic Dale, and then there was a colloquy on the quintuplication, and everything that had been charged, and truly charged, by the English, was now denied by the King's commissioners; and Champagny—more gouty and more irascible than ever—"chopped in" at every word spoken by King's envoys or Queen's, contradicted everybody, repudiated everything said or done by Andrew de Loo, or any of the other secret negotiators during the past year, declared that there never had been a general cessation of arms promised, and that, at any rate, times were now changed, and such an armistice was inadmissible.² Then the English answered with equal impatience, and reproached the King's representatives with duplicity and want of faith, and censured them for their unseemly language, and begged to inform Champagny and Richardot that they had not then to deal with such persons as they might formerly have been in the habit of treating withal, but with a "great prince who did justify the honour of her actions," and they confuted the positions now assumed by their opponents with official documents and former statements from those very opponents' lips. And then, after all this diplomatic and rhetorical splutter, the high commissioners recovered their temper and grew more polite, and the King's "envoys excused themselves in a mild,

¹ Commissioners to Privy Council, $\frac{7}{17}$ June, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Ibid. (MS. last cited.)

merry manner," for the rudeness of their speeches, and the Queen's envoys accepted their apologies with majestic urbanity, and so they separated for the day in a more friendly manner than they had done the day before.¹

"You see to what a scholar's shift we have been driven for want of resolution," said Valentine Dale. "If we should linger here until there should be broken heads, in what case we should be God knoweth. For I can trust Champagny and Richardot no farther than I can see them."²

And so the whole month of June passed by; the English commissioners "leaving no stone unturned to get a quiet cessation of arms in general terms,"³ and being constantly foiled; yet perpetually kept in hope⁴ that the point would soon be carried. At the same time the signs of the approaching invasion seemed to thicken. "In my opinion," said Dale, "as Phormio spake in matters of wars, it were very requisite that my Lord Harry should be always on this coast, for they will steal out from hence as closely as they can, either to join with the Spanish navy or to land, and they may be very easily scattered, by God's grace." And, with the honest pride of a protocol-maker, he added, "our postulates do trouble the King's commissioners very much, and do bring them to despair."⁵

The excellent Doctor had not even yet discovered that the King's commissioners were delighted with his postulates; and that to have kept them postulating thus five months in succession, while naval and military preparations were slowly bringing forth a great event—which was soon to strike them with as much amazement as if the moon had fallen out of heaven—was one of the most decisive triumphs ever achieved

¹ Commissioners to Privy Council, $\frac{21}{31}$ June, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Dale to Walsingham, $\frac{4}{14}$ June, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

"And if her Majesty list to break, she may now do it upon their present denial of the cessation of arms, which Richardot did in open council promise

to Norris and Andrea de Loo should be accorded at the coming of her Majesty's commissioners, and which is now denied as ever spoken, or to be performed, if promised." (Ibid.)

³ Dale to Burghley, $\frac{17}{27}$ June, 1588 (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

by Spanish diplomacy. But the Doctor thought that his logic had driven the King of Spain to despair.

At the same time he was not insensible to the merits of another and more peremptory style of rhetoric. "I pray you," said he to Walsingham, "let us hear some arguments from my Lord Harry out of her Majesty's navy now and then. I think they will do more good than any bolt that we can shoot here. If they be met with at their going out, there is no possibility for them to make any resistance, having so few men that can abide the sea; for the rest, as you know, must be sea-sick at first."¹

But the envoys were completely puzzled. Even at the beginning of July, Sir James Croft was quite convinced of the innocence of the King and the Duke;² but Croft was in his dotage. As for Dale, he occasionally opened his eyes and his ears, but more commonly kept them well closed to the significance of passing events, and consoled himself with his protocols and his classics, and the purity of his own Latin.

"'Tis a very wise saying of Terence," said he, "*omnibus nobis ut res dant sese, ita magni aut humiles sumus*. When the King's commissioners hear of the King's navy from Spain, they are in such jollity that they talk loud. . . . In the mean time—as the wife of Bath saith in Chaucer by her husband, we owe them not a word. If we should die tomorrow, I hope her Majesty will find by our writings that the honour of the cause, in the opinion of the world, must be with her Majesty, and that her commissioners are neither of such imperfection in their reasons or so barbarous in language, as

¹ Dale to Burghley, MS. last cited.

² "I may be esteemed more credulous than cause requireth, yet I assure your Lordship I never embraced any opinion thereof other than such as by some conjectural argument was made very probable unto me, like as I thought good at this time to inform your Lordship, that yesterday by chance I had conference with one of the commissioners on the other side, and was by him in sort assured that the matter of this treaty will fall out—so far as in that side lieth—to as good purpose

as her Majesty will require it; he not doubting that the two years for the toleration of religion, and the point of her Majesty's security, and all other things necessary in this treaty, will be easily assented unto, to which purpose he wished me to deal with Dr. Dale to be willing to urge that which he underhand would advise us unto, requiring for their better justification to be pressed to that which themselves much desire" (!!) &c. Croft to Burghley, 22 June 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)
2 July

they who fail not, almost in every line, of some barbarism not to be borne in a grammar-school, although in subtleness and impudent affirming of untruths and denying of truths, her commissioners are not in any respect to match with Champagne and Richardot, who are doctors in that faculty."¹

It might perhaps prove a matter of indifference to Elizabeth and to England, when the Queen should be a state-prisoner in Spain and the Inquisition quietly established in her kingdom, whether the world should admit or not, in case of his decease, the superiority of Dr. Dale's logic and Latin to those of his antagonists. And even if mankind conceded the best of the argument to the English diplomatists, that diplomaey might seem worthless which could be blind to the colossal falsehoods growing daily before its eyes. Had the commissioners been able to read the secret correspondence between Parma and his master—as we have had the opportunity of doing—they would certainly not have left their homes in February, to be made fools of until July, but would, on their knees, have implored their royal mistress to awake from her fatal delusion before it should be too late. Even without that advantage, it seems incredible that they should have been unable to pierce through the atmosphere of duplicity which surrounded them, and to obtain one clear glimpse of the destruction so steadily advancing upon England.

For the famous bull of Sixtus V. had now been fulminated. Elizabeth had been again denounced as a bastard and usurper, and her kingdom had been solemnly conferred upon Philip, with title of defender of the Christian faith, to have and to hold as tributary and feudatory of Rome. The so-called Queen had usurped the crown contrary to the ancient treaties between the apostolic stool and the kingdom of England, which country, on its reconciliation with the head of the church after the death of St. Thomas of Canterbury, had recognised the necessity of the Pope's consent in the succession to its throne; she had deserved chastisement for the terrible tortures inflicted by her upon English Catholics and God's own saints;

¹ Dale to Burghley, $\frac{21}{31}$ June, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

and it was declared an act of virtue, to be repaid with plenary indulgence and forgiveness of all sins, to lay violent hands on the usurper, and deliver her into the hands of the Catholic party. And of the holy league against the usurper, Philip was appointed the head, and Alexander of Parma chief commander. This document was published in large numbers in Antwerp in the English tongue.¹

The pamphlet of Dr. Allen, just named Cardinal, was also translated in the same city, under the direction of the Duke of Parma, in order to be distributed throughout England, on the arrival in that kingdom of the Catholic troops.² The well-known 'Admonition to the Nobility and People of England and Ireland' accused the Queen of every crime and vice which can pollute humanity, and was filled with foul details unfit for the public eye in these more decent days.³

So soon as the intelligence of these publications reached England, the Queen ordered her commissioners at Bourbourg to take instant cognizance of them, and to obtain a categorical explanation on the subject from Alexander himself: as if an explanation were possible, as if the designs of Sixtus, Philip, and Alexander, could any longer be doubted, and as if the Duke were more likely now than before to make a succinct statement of them for the benefit of her Majesty.

"Having discovered," wrote Elizabeth on the 9th July (N.S.), "that this treaty of peace is entertained only to abuse us, and being many ways given to understand that the preparations which have so long been making, and which now are consummated, both in Spain and the Low Countries, are purposely to be employed against us and our country; finding that, for the furtherance of these exploits, there is ready to be published a vile, slanderous, and blasphemous book, containing as many lies as lines, entitled, 'An Admonition,' &c., and contrived by a lewd born-subject of ours, now become an arrant traitor, named Dr. Allen, lately made a cardinal at Rome; as also a bull of the Pope, whereof we send you a

¹ Meteren, xv. 270, seq.

² Parma to Philip II. 21 June, 1588.

(Arch. de Sim. MS.)

³ Lingard, viii. 442, seq.

copy, both very lately brought into those Low Countries, the one whereof is already printed at Antwerp, in a great multitude, in the English tongue, and the other ordered to be printed, only to stir up our subjects, contrary to the laws of God and their allegiance, to join with such foreign purposes as are prepared against us and our realm, to come out of those Low Countries and out of Spain; and as it appears by the said bull that the Duke of Parma is expressly named and chosen by the Pope and the King of Spain to be principal executioner of these intended enterprises, we cannot think it honourable for us to continue longer the treaty of peace with them that, under colour of treaty, arm themselves with all the power they can to a bloody war."¹

Accordingly the Queen commanded Dr. Dale, as one of the commissioners, to proceed forthwith to the Duke, in order to obtain explanations as to his contemplated conquest of her realm, and as to his share in the publication of the bull and pamphlet, and to "require him, as he would be accounted a prince of honour, to let her plainly understand what she might think thereof." The envoy was to assure him that the Queen would trust implicitly to his statement, to adjure him to declare the truth, and, in case he avowed the publications and the belligerent intentions suspected, to demand instant safe-conduct to England for her commissioners, who would, of course, instantly leave the Netherlands. On the other hand, if the Duke disavowed those infamous documents, he was to be requested to punish the printers, and have the books burned by the hangman.²

Dr. Dale, although suffering from cholic, was obliged to set forth at once upon what he felt would be a bootless journey. At his return—which was upon the 22nd of July (N.S.)—the shrewd old gentleman had nearly arrived at the opinion that her Majesty might as well break off the negotiations. He had a "comfortless voyage and a ticklish message;"³ found all along the road signs of an approaching enterprise, difficult to be mistaken; reported 10,000 veteran Spaniards,

¹ Queen to Commissioners, $\frac{29 \text{ June}}{9 \text{ July}}$ | ² Dale to Burghley, $\frac{12}{22} \text{ July, 1588}$
1588. (S. P. Office MS. ³ Ibid.) | (S. P. Office MS.)

to which force Stanley's regiment was united ; 6000 Italians, 3000 Germans, all with pikes, corselets, and slash swords complete ; besides 10,000 Walloons. The transports for the cavalry at Gravelingen he did not see, nor was he much impressed with what he heard as to the magnitude of the naval preparations at Newport. He was informed that the Duke was about making a foot-pilgrimage from Brussels to Our Lady of Halle, to implore victory for his banners, and had daily evidence of the soldier's expectation to invade and to "devour England."¹ All this had not tended to cure him of the low spirits with which he began the journey. Nevertheless, although he was unable—as will be seen—to report an entirely satisfactory answer from Farnese to the Queen upon the momentous questions entrusted to him, he, at least, thought of a choice passage in 'The Æneid,' so very apt to the circumstances, as almost to console him for the "pangs of his cholic" and the terrors of the approaching invasion.

"I have written two or three verses out of Virgil for the Queen to read," said he, "which I pray your Lordship to present unto her. *God grant her to weigh them.* If your Lordship do read the whole discourse of Virgil in that place, *it will make your heart melt.* Observe the report of the ambassadors that were sent to Diomedes to make war against the Trojans, for the old hatred that he, being a Grecian, did bear unto them ; and note the answer of Diomedes dissuading them from entering into war with the Trojans, the perplexity of the King, the miseries of the country, the reasons of Drances that spake against them which would have war, the violent persuasions of Turnus to war ; and note, I pray you, one word, '*nec te ullius violentia frangat.*'"² What a lecture could I make with Mr. Cecil upon that passage in Virgil !"³

The most important point for the reader to remark is the date of this letter. It was received in the very *last days of*

¹ Dale to Walsingham, date last cited. (S. P. Office MS.)

² The reader who will take the trouble to refer to the Æneid, lib. xi. may amuse himself by observing that the aptness of the analogy was by no

means so wonderful as it seemed to Dr. Dale, "*nec te ullius violentia VIN-CAT (FRANGAT), &c.*" 354.

³ Dale to Burghley, ¹²/₂₂ July, 1582 (S. P. Office MS.)

the month of July. Let him observe—as he will soon have occasion to do—the events which were occurring on land and sea, exactly at the moment when this classic despatch reached its destination, and judge whether the hearts of the Queen and Lord Burghley would be then quite at leisure to melt at the sorrows of the Trojan War. Perhaps the doings of Drake and Howard, Medina Sidonia, and Ricalde, would be pressing as much on their attention as the eloquence of Diomede or the wrath of Turnus. Yet it may be doubted whether the reports of these Grecian envoys might not, in truth, be almost as much to the purpose as the despatches of the diplomatic pedant, with his Virgil and his cholic, into whose hands grave matters of peace and war were entrusted in what seemed the day of England's doom.

“What a lecture I could make with Mr. Cecil on the subject!” An English ambassador, at the court of Philip II.'s viceroy, could indulge himself in imaginary prelections on the *Æneid*, in the last days of July, of the year of our Lord 1588!

The Doctor, however—to do him justice—had put the questions categorically to his Highness as he had been instructed ⁸ July, to do. He went to Bruges so mysteriously, that no ₁₅ 1588. living man, that side the sea, save Lord Derby and Lord Cobham, knew the cause of his journey.¹ Poor puzzling James Croft, in particular, was moved almost to tears, by being kept out of the secret.² On the ⁸/₁₈ July Dale had audience of the Duke at Bruges. After a few commonplaces, he was invited by the Duke to state what special purpose had brought him to Bruges.

“There is a book printed at Antwerp,” said Dale, “and set forth by a fugitive from England, who calleth himself a cardinal.”³

Upon this the Duke began diligently to listen.

“This book,” resumed Dale, “is an admonition to the nobility and people of England and Ireland touching the execution of the sentence of the Pope against the Queen, which the King Catholic hath entrusted to your Highness as

¹ Dale to Burghley, MS. last cited.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

chief of the enterprise. There is also a bull of the Pope declaring my sovereign mistress illegitimate and an usurper, with other matters too odious for any prince or gentleman to name or hear. In this bull the Pope saith that he hath dealt with the most Catholic King to employ all the means in his power to the deprivation and deposition of my sovereign, and doth charge her subjects to assist the army appointed by the King Catholic for that purpose, under the conduct of your Highness. Therefore her Majesty would be satisfied from your Highness in that point, and will take satisfaction of none other; not doubting but that as you are a prince of word and credit, you will deal plainly with her Majesty. Whatsoever it may be, her Majesty will not take it amiss against your Highness, so she may only be informed by you of the truth. Wherefore I do require you to satisfy the Queen."¹

"I am glad," replied the Duke, "that her Majesty and her commissioners do take in good part my good-will towards them. I am especially touched by the good opinion her Majesty hath of my sincerity, which I should be glad always to maintain. As to the book to which you refer, I have never read it, nor seen it, nor do I take heed of it. It may well be that her Majesty, whom it concerneth, should take notice of it; but, for my part, I have nought to do with it, nor can I prevent men from writing or printing at their pleasure. I am at the commandment of my master only."²

As Alexander made no reference to the Pope's bull, Dr. Dale observed, that if a war had been, of purpose, undertaken at the instance of the Pope, all this negotiation had been in vain, and her Majesty would be obliged to withdraw her commissioners, not doubting that they would receive safe-conduct as occasion should require.

"Yea, God forbid else," replied Alexander; "and further, *I know nothing* of any bull of the Pope, nor do I care for any, nor do I undertake anything for him. But as for any misunderstanding (*mal entendu*) between my master and her Majesty, I must, as a soldier, act at the command of my

¹ Dale to Burghley, MS. last cited.

² Ibid. (MS. last cited.)

sovereign. For my part, I have always had such respect for her Majesty, being so noble a Queen, as that I would never hearken to anything that might be reproachful to her. After my master, I would do most to serve your Queen, and I hope she will take my word for her satisfaction on that point. And for avoiding of bloodshed and the burning of houses and such other calamities as do follow the wars, I have been a petitioner to my sovereign that all things might be ended quietly by a peace. That is a thing, however," added the Duke, "which you have more cause to desire than we; for if the King my master, should lose a battle, he would be able to recover it well enough, without harm to himself, being far enough off in Spain, while, if the battle be lost on your side, you may lose kingdom and all."¹

"By God's sufferance," rejoined the Doctor, "her Majesty is not without means to defend her crown, that hath descended to her from so long a succession of ancestors. Moreover your Highness knows very well that one battle cannot conquer a kingdom in another country."

"Well," said the Duke, "that is in God's hand."

"So it is," said the Doctor.

"But make an end of it," continued Alexander quietly, "and if you have anything to put into writing, you will do me a pleasure by sending it to me."²

Dr. Valentine Dale was not the man to resist the temptation to make a protocol, and promised one for the next day.

"I am charged only to give your Highness satisfaction," he said, "as to her Majesty's sincere intentions, which have already been published to the world in English, French, and Italian, in the hope that you may also satisfy the Queen upon this other point. I am but one of her commissioners, and could not deal without my colleagues. I crave leave to depart to-morrow morning, and with safe-convoy, as I had in coming."

After the envoy had taken leave, the Duke summoned Andrea de Loo, and related to him the conversation which had

¹ Dale to Burghley. (MS. last cited.)

² *Ibid.*

taken place. He then, in the presence of that personage, again declared upon his honour and with very constant affirmations, that he had never *seen nor heard of the book*—the ‘Admonition’ by Cardinal Allen—and that he knew nothing of any bull, and had no regard to it.¹

The plausible Andrew accompanied the Doctor to his lodgings, protesting all the way of his own and his master’s sincerity, and of their unequivocal intentions to conclude a peace. The next day the Doctor, by agreement, brought a most able protocol of demands in the name of all the commissioners of her Majesty;² which able protocol the Duke did not at that moment read, which he assuredly never read subsequently, and which no human soul ever read afterwards. Let the dust lie upon it, and upon all the vast heaps of protocols raised mountains high during the spring and summer of 1588.

“Dr. Dale has been with me two or three times,” said Parma, in giving his account of these interviews to Philip. “I don’t know why he came, but I think he wished to make it appear, by coming to Bruges, that the rupture, when it occurs, was caused by us, not by the English. He has been complaining of Cardinal Allen’s book, and I told him that I didn’t understand a word of English, and knew nothing whatever of the matter.”³

It has been already seen that the Duke had declared, on his word of honour, that he had never heard of the famous pamphlet. Yet at that very moment letters were lying in his cabinet, received more than a fortnight before from Philip, in which that monarch *thanked Alexander for having had the Cardinal’s book translated at Antwerp!*”⁴ Certainly few English diplomatists could be a match for a Highness so liberal of his word of honour.

But even Dr. Dale had at last convinced himself—even although the Duke knew nothing of bull or pamphlet—that mischief was brewing against England. The sagacious man,

¹ Dale to Burghley. MS. last cited.

² Ibid.

³ Parma to Philip, 21 July, 1588.

(Arch. de Sim. MS.)

⁴ Philip II. to Parma, 21 June, 1588

(Arch. de Sim. MS.)

having seen large bodies of Spaniards and Walloons making such demonstrations of eagerness to be led against his country, and "professing it as openly as if they were going to a fair or market," while even Alexander himself could "no more hide it than did Henry VIII. when he went to Boulogne,"¹ could not help suspecting something amiss.

His colleague, however, Comptroller Croft, was more judicious, for he valued himself on taking a sound, temperate, and conciliatory view of affairs. He was not the man to offend a magnanimous neighbour—who meant nothing unfriendly—by regarding his manœuvres with superfluous suspicion. So this envoy wrote to Lord Burghley on the 2nd August (N. S.)—let the reader mark the date—that, "although a great doubt had been conceived as to the King's sincerity, . . . yet that *discretion and experience* induced him—the envoy—to think, that besides *the reverent opinion to be had of princes' oaths*, and the general incommmodity which will come by the contrary, God had so balanced princes' powers in that age, as they rather *desire to assure themselves at home*, than with danger to *invade their neighbours*."²

Perhaps the mariners of England—at that very instant exchanging broadsides off the coast of Devon and Dorset with the Spanish Armada, and doing their best to protect their native land from the most horrible calamity which had ever impended over it—had arrived at a less reverent opinion of princes' oaths; and it was well for England in that supreme hour that there were such men as Howard and Drake, and Winter and Frobisher, and a whole people with hearts of oak to defend her, while bungling diplomatists and credulous dotards were doing their best to imperil her existence.

But it is necessary—in order to obtain a complete picture of that famous year 1588, and to understand the cause from which such great events were springing—to cast a glance at the internal politics of the States most involved in Philip's meshes.

¹ Dale to Burghley, $\frac{12}{22}$ July, 1588.
(S. P. Office MS.)

² Croft to Burghley, $\frac{28 \text{ July}}{2 \text{ Aug.}}$, 1588.
(S. P. Office MS.)

Certainly, if there had ever been a time when the new commonwealth of the Netherlands should be both united in itself and on thoroughly friendly terms with England, it was exactly that epoch of which we are treating. There could be no reasonable doubt that the designs of Spain against England were hostile, and against Holland revengeful. It was at least possible that Philip meant to undertake the conquest of England, and to undertake it as a stepping-stone to the conquest of Holland. Both the kingdom and the republic should have been alert, armed, full of suspicion towards the common foe, full of confidence in each other. What decisive blows might have been struck against Parma in the Netherlands, when his troops were starving, sickly, and mutinous, if the Hollanders and Englishmen had been united under one chieftain, and thoroughly convinced of the impossibility of peace! Could the English and Dutch statesmen of that day have read all the secrets of their great enemy's heart, as it is our privilege at this hour to do, they would have known that in sudden and deadly strokes lay their best chance of salvation. But, without that advantage, there were men whose sagacity told them that it was the hour for deeds and not for dreams. For to Leicester and Walsingham, as well as to Paul Buys and Barneveld, peace with Spain seemed an idle vision. It was unfortunate that they were overruled by Queen Elizabeth and Burghley, who still clung to that delusion; it was still more disastrous that the intrigues of Leicester had done so much to paralyze the republic; it was almost fatal that his departure, without laying down his authority, had given the signal for civil war.

During the winter, spring, and summer of 1588, while the Duke—in the face of mighty obstacles—was slowly proceeding with his preparations in Flanders, to co-operate with the armaments from Spain, it would have been possible by a combined movement to destroy his whole plan, to liberate all the Netherlands, and to avert, by one great effort, the ruin impending over England. Instead of such vigorous action, it was thought wiser to send commissioners, to make protocols, to ask for armistices, to give profusely to the enemy that which he was

most in need of—time. Meanwhile the Hollanders and English could quarrel comfortably among themselves, and the little republic, for want of a legal head, could come as near as possible to its dissolution.

Young Maurice—deep thinker for his years and peremptory in action—was not the man to see his great father's life-work annihilated before his eyes, so long as he had an arm and brain of his own. He accepted his position at the head of the government of Holland and Zeeland, and as chief of the war-party. The council of state, mainly composed of Leicester's creatures, whose commissions would soon expire by their own limitation, could offer but a feeble resistance to such determined individuals as Maurice, Buys, and Barneveld. The party made rapid progress. On the other hand, the English Leicestrians did their best to foment discord in the Provinces. Sonoy was sustained in his rebellion in North Holland, not only by the Earl's partizans, but by Elizabeth herself. Her rebukes to Maurice, when Maurice was pursuing the only course which seemed to him consistent with honour and sound policy, were sharper than a sword. Well might Duplessis Mornay observe, that the commonwealth had been rather strangled than embraced by the English Queen. Sonoy, in the name of Leicester, took arms against Maurice and the States; Maurice marched against him; and Lord Willoughby, commander-in-chief of the English forces, was anxious to march against Maurice. It was a spectacle to make angels weep, that of Englishmen and Hollanders preparing to cut each other's throats, at the moment when Philip and Parma were bending all their energies to crush England and Holland at once.

Indeed, the interregnum between the departure of Leicester and his abdication was diligently employed by his more reckless partizans to defeat and destroy the authority of the States. By prolonging the interval, it was hoped that no government would be possible except the arbitrary rule of the Earl, or of a successor with similar views: for a republic—a free commonwealth—was thought an absurdity. To entrust supreme

power to advocates, merchants, and mechanics, seemed as hopeless as it was vulgar. Willoughby, much devoted to Leicester and much detesting Barneveld, had small scruple in fanning the flames of discord.

There was open mutiny against the States by the garrison of Gertruydenberg, and Willoughby's brother-in-law, Captain Wingfield, commanded in Gertruydenberg. There were rebellious demonstrations in Naarden, and Willoughby went to Naarden. The garrison was troublesome, but most of the magistrates were firm. So Willoughby supped with the burgomasters, and found that Paul Buys had been setting the people against Queen Elizabeth, Leicester, and the whole English nation, making them all odious. Colonel Dorp said openly that it was a shame for the country to refuse their own natural-born Count for strangers. He swore that he would sing his song whose bread he had eaten.¹ A "fat militia captain" of the place, one Soyssons, on the other hand, privately informed Willoughby that Maurice and Barneveld were treating underhand with Spain. Willoughby was inclined to believe the calumny, but feared that his corpulent friend would lose his head for reporting it. Meantime the English commander did his best to strengthen the English party in their rebellion against the States.

"But how if they make war upon us?" asked the Leicestrians.

"It is very likely," replied Willoughby, "that if they use violence you will have her Majesty's assistance, and then you who continue constant to the end will be rewarded accordingly. Moreover, who would not rather be a horse-keeper to her Majesty, than a captain to Barneveld or Buys?"²

¹ Willoughby to —, ¹⁸/₂₈ Feb. 1588.
(S. P. Office MS.)

² Ibid. "It was likewise said openly to Count Maurice at his table, 'Sir, if the Prince your father had been offered the third part by the enemy which you have been, he would have accepted it; and it is not a good occasion that you may article what you

will, and have whatever you may demand. Soyssons, a fat captain of Naarden, fed for their tooth, confessed to me that they had practised with the enemy. Thus you may see their dispositions; much ado had I to persuade the burgomasters of the honourable course her Majesty would hold, and no less to assure the unfortunate captain, whose head I fear will pay

When at last the resignation of Leicester—presented to the States by Killegrew on the 31st March¹—seemed to promise comparative repose to the republic, the vexation of the Leicestrians was intense. Their efforts to effect a dissolution of the government had been rendered unsuccessful, when success seemed within their grasp. “Albeit what is once executed cannot be prevented,” said Captain Champernoun; “yet ’tis thought certain that if the resignation of Lord Leicester’s commission had been deferred yet some little time, the whole country and towns would have so revolted and mutinied against the government and authority of the States, as that they should have had no more credit given them by the people than pleased her Majesty. Most part of the people could see—in consequence of the troubles, discontent, mutiny of garrisons, and the like, that it was most necessary for the good success of their affairs that the power of the States should be abolished, and the whole government of his Excellency erected. As these matters were busily working into the likelihood of some good effect, came the resignation of his Excellency’s commission and authority, which so dashed the proceedings of it, as that all people and commanders well affected unto her Majesty and my Lord of Leicester are utterly discouraged. The States, with their adherents, before they had my Lord’s resignation, were much perplexed what course to take, but now begin to hoist their heads.” The excellent Leicestrian entertained hopes, however, that mutiny and intrigue might still carry the day. He had seen the fat militiaman of Naarden and other captains, and hoped much mischief from their schemes. “The chief mutineers of Gertruydenberg,” he said, “may be wrought to send unto the States, that if they do not procure them some English governor, they will compound with the enemy, *whereon the States shall be*

for all. Further, I said it was sure that the States-General, the council of state, which I was somewhat acquainted with, nor the two counts who had feasted us and drunk the health of his Excellency, meant but all well to us.’ ‘Well,’ said the old

burgomaster, ‘but that I hear you say so, I would scarcely believe it, for mine ears have often borne witness to the contrary.’” &c. Willoughby to

—, 20 Feb. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

—, 2 Mar. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

¹ Bor. III. 224. Wagenaar, viii. 265.

driven to request her Majesty to accept the place, themselves entertaining the garrison. I know certain captains discontented with the States for arrears of pay, who *will contrive to get into Naarden* with their companies, with the States' consent, who, once entered, will keep the place for their satisfaction, pay their soldiers out of the contributions of the country, and yet secretly hold the place at her Majesty's command."¹

This is not an agreeable picture ; yet it is but one out of many examples of the intrigues by which Leicester and his party were doing their best to destroy the commonwealth of the Netherlands at a moment when its existence was most important to that of England.

To foment mutiny in order to subvert the authority of Maurice, was not a friendly or honourable course of action either towards Holland or England ; and it was to play into the hands of Philip as adroitly as his own stipendiaries could have done.²

With mischief-makers like Champernoun in every city, and with such diplomatists at Ostend as Croft and Rogers and Valentine Dale, was it wonderful that the King and the Duke of Parma found time to mature their plans for the destruction of both countries ?

Lord Willoughby, too, was extremely dissatisfied with his own position. He received no commission from the Queen for several months. When it at last reached him, it seemed inadequate, and he became more sullen than ever. He declared that he would rather serve the Queen as a private soldier, at his own expense—"lean as his purse was"—than accept the limited authority conferred on him. He preferred to show his devotion "in a beggarly state, than in a formal show." He considered it beneath her Majesty's dignity that

¹ Arthur Champernoun to Walsingham, ² April, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.) He commanded an English company in Utrecht.

² "I congratulate you," wrote Philip

to Farnese, "upon the disputes between the rebels and the English, and among themselves. I trust you will get good fruit from their quarrels." Philip to Parma, 13 May, 1588. (Arch de Sim. MS.)

he should act in the field under the States, but his instructions forbade his acceptance of any office from that body but that of general in their service. He was very discontented, and more anxious than ever to be rid of his functions. Without being extremely ambitious, he was impatient of control. He desired not "a larger-shaped coat," but one that fitted him better. "I wish to shape my garment homely, after my cloth," he said, "that the better of my parish may not be misled by my sumptuousness. I would live quietly, without great noise, my poor roof low and near the ground, not subject to be overblown with unlooked-for storms, while the sun seems most shining."¹

Being the deadly enemy of the States and their leaders, it was a matter of course that he should be bitter against Maurice. That young Prince, bold, enterprising, and determined, as he was, did not ostensibly meddle with political affairs more than became his years; but he accepted the counsels of the able statesmen in whom his father had trusted. Riding, hunting, and hawking, seemed to be his chief delight at the Hague, in the intervals of military occupations. He rarely made his appearance in the state-council during the winter, and referred public matters to the States-General, to the States of Holland, to Barneveld, Buys, and Hohenlo.² Superficial observers like George Gilpin regarded him as a cipher; others, like Robert Cecil, thought him an unmannerly school-boy; but Willoughby, although considering him insolent and conceited, could not deny his ability. The peace partisans among the burghers—a very small faction—were furious against him, for they knew that Maurice of Nassau represented war. They accused of deep designs against the liberties of their country the youth who was ever ready to risk his life in their defence. A burgomaster from Friesland, who had come across the Zuyder Zee to intrigue against the States' party, was full of spleen at being obliged to dance attendance

¹ Willoughby to Burghley, ^{28 Jan.}
2 Feb. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Gilpin to Walsingham, ⁴
14 Feb. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

for a long time at the Hague. He complained that Count Maurice, green of years, and seconded by greener counsellors, was meditating the dissolution of the state-council, the appointment of a new board from his own creatures, the overthrow of all other authority, and the assumption of the sovereignty of Holland and Zeeland, with absolute power. "And when this is done," said the rueful burgomaster, "he and his turbulent fellows may make what terms they like with Spain, to the disadvantage of the Queen and of us poor wretches."¹

But there was nothing farther from the thoughts of the turbulent fellows than any negotiations with Spain. Maurice was ambitious enough, perhaps, but his ambition ran in no such direction. Willoughby knew better, and thought that by humouring the petulant young man it might be possible to manage him.

"Maurice is young," he said, "hot-headed, coveting honour. If we do but look at him through our fingers, without much words, but with providence enough, baiting his hook a little to his appetite, there is no doubt but he might be caught and kept in a fish-pool, while in his imagination he may judge it a sea. If not, 'tis likely he will make us fish in troubled waters."²

Maurice was hardly the fish for a mill-pond even at that epoch, and it might one day be seen whether or not he could float in the great ocean of events. Meanwhile, he swam his course without superfluous gambols or spoutings.

The commander of her Majesty's forces was not satisfied with the States, nor their generals, nor their politicians. "Affairs are going *a malo in pejus*," he said. "They embrace their liberty as apes their young. To this end are Counts Hollock and Maurice set upon the stage to entertain the popular sort. Her Majesty and my Lord of Leicester are not forgotten. The Counts are in Holland, especially Hollock, for the other is but the cipher. And yet I can assure you *Maurice hath wit and spirit too much for his time*."³

¹ Willoughby to Burghley, $\frac{12}{22}$ Jan. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Same to same, $\frac{16}{26}$ Jan. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

As the troubles of the interregnum increased Willoughby was more dissatisfied than ever with the miserable condition of the Provinces, but chose to ascribe it to the machinations of the States' party, rather than to the ambiguous conduct of Leicester. "These evils," he said, "are especially derived from the childish ambition of the young Count Maurice, from the covetous and furious counsels of the proud Hollanders, now chief of the States-General, and, if with pardon it may be said, from our slackness and coldness to entertain our friends. The provident and wiser sort—weighing what a slender ground the appetite of a young man is, unfurnished with the sinews of war to manage so great a cause—for a good space after my Lord of Leicester's departure, gave him far looking on, to see him play his part on the stage."¹

Willoughby's spleen caused him to mix his metaphors more recklessly than strict taste would warrant, but his violent expressions painted the relative situation of parties more vividly than could be done by a calm disquisition. Maurice thus playing his part upon the stage—as the general proceeded to observe—"was a skittish horse, becoming by little and little assured of what he had feared, and perceiving the harmlessness thereof; while his companions, finding no safety of neutrality in so great practices, and no overturning nor barricado to stop his rash wilded chariot, followed without fear; and when some of the first had passed the bog, the rest, as the fashion is, never started after. The variable democracy, embracing novelty, began to applaud their prosperity; the base and lowliest sorts of men, to whom there is nothing more agreeable than change of estates, is a better monture to degrees than their merit, took present hold thereof. Hereby Paul Buys, Barneveld, and divers others, who were before mantled with a tolerable affection, though seasoned with a poisoned intention, caught the occasion, and made themselves the Beelzebubs of all these mischiefs, and, for want of better angels, spared not to let fly our golden-

¹ Willoughby to Walsingham, ^{19 Feb.}_{1 Mar.} 1588. S. P. Office MS.

winged ones in the name of guilders, to prepare the hearts and hands that hold money more dearer than honesty, of which sort, the country troubles and the Spanish practices having suckled up many, they found enough to serve their purpose. As the breach is safely saltable where no defence is made, so they, finding no head, but those scattered arms that were disavowed, drew the sword with Peter, and gave pardon with the Pope, as you shall plainly perceive by the proceedings at Horn. Thus their force, fair words, or corruption, prevailing everywhere, it grew to this conclusion—that the worst were encouraged with their good success, and the best sort assured of no fortune or favour.”¹

Out of all this hubbub of stage-actors, skittish horses, rash wilded chariots, bogs, Beelzebubs, and golden-winged angels, one truth was distinctly audible ; that Beelzebub, in the shape of Barneveld, had been getting the upper hand in the Netherlands, and that the Lecestrians were at a disadvantage. In truth those partisans were becoming extremely impatient. Finding themselves deserted by their great protector, they naturally turned their eyes towards Spain, and were now threatening to sell themselves to Philip. The Earl, at his departure, had given them privately much encouragement. But month after month had passed by while they were waiting in vain for comfort. At last the “best”—that is to say, the unhappy Lecestrians—came to Willoughby, asking his advice in their “declining and desperate cause.”

“Well nigh a month longer,” said that general, “I nourished them with compliments, and assured them that my Lord of Leicester would take care of them.”² The diet was not fattening. So they began to grumble more loudly than ever, and complained with great bitterness of the miserable condition in which they had been left by the Earl, and expressed their fears lest the Queen likewise meant to abandon them. They protested that their poverty, their powerful foes, and their slow friends, would compel them either to make their peace with the States’ party, or “compound with the enemy.”

¹ Willoughby to Walsingham, MS. last cited.

² *Ibid.*

It would have seemed that real patriots, under such circumstances, would hardly hesitate in their choice, and would sooner accept the dominion of "Beelzebub," or even Paul Buys, than that of Philip II. But the Leicestrians of Utrecht and Friesland—patriots as they were—hated Holland worse than they hated the Inquisition. Willoughby encouraged them in that hatred. He assured him of her Majesty's affection for them, complained of the factious proceedings of the States, and alluded to the unfavourable state of the weather, as a reason why—near four months long—they had not received the comfort out of England which they had a right to expect. He assured them that neither the Queen nor Leicester would conclude this honourable action, wherein much had been hazarded, "so rawly and tragically" as they seemed to fear, and warned them, that "if they did join with Holland, it would neither ease nor help them, but draw them into a more dishonourable loss of their liberties; and that, after having wound them in, the Hollanders would make their own peace with the enemy."¹

It seemed somewhat unfair—while the Queen's government was straining every nerve to obtain a peace from Philip, and while the Hollanders were obstinately deaf to any propositions for treating—that Willoughby should accuse them of secret intentions to negotiate. But it must be confessed that faction has rarely worn a more mischievous aspect than was presented by the politics of Holland and England in the winter and spring of 1588.

Young Maurice was placed in a very painful position. He liked not to be "strangled in the great Queen's embrace;" but he felt most keenly the necessity of her friendship, and the importance to both countries of a close alliance. It was impossible for him, however, to tolerate the rebellion of Sonoy, although Sonoy was encouraged by Elizabeth, or to fly in the face of Barneveld, although Barneveld was detested by Leicester. So with much firmness and courtesy, notwithstanding the extravagant pictures painted by Willoughby,

¹ Willoughby to Walsingham, MS. last cited.

he suppressed mutiny in Holland, while avowing the most chivalrous attachment to the sovereign of England.

Her Majesty expressed her surprise and her discontent, that, notwithstanding his expressions of devotion to herself, he should thus deal with Sonoy, whose only crime was an equal devotion. "If you do not behave with more moderation in future," she said, "you may believe that we are not a princess of so little courage as not to know how to lend a helping hand to those who are unjustly oppressed. We should be sorry if we had cause to be disgusted with your actions, and if we were compelled to make you a stranger to the ancient good affection which we bore to your late father, and have continued towards yourself."¹

But Maurice maintained a dignified attitude, worthy of his great father's name. He was not the man to crouch like Leicester, when he could no longer refresh himself in the "shadow of the Queen's golden beams," important as he knew her friendship to be to himself and his country. So he defended himself in a manly letter to the privy council against the censures of Elizabeth.² He avowed his displeasure, that, within his own jurisdiction, Sonoy should give a special oath of obedience to Leicester; a thing never done before in the country, and entirely illegal. It would not even be tolerated in England, he said, if a private gentleman should receive a military appointment in Warwickshire or Norfolk without the knowledge of the lord-lieutenant of the shire. He had treated the contumacious Sonoy with mildness during a long period, but without effect. He had abstained from violence towards him, out of reverence to the Queen, under whose sacred name he sheltered himself. Sonoy had not desisted, but had established himself in organized rebellion at Medenblik, declaring that he would drown the whole country, and levy black-mail upon its whole property, if he were not paid one hundred thousand crowns. He had declared that he would crush Hol-

¹ Queen to Maurice of Nassau,
 $\frac{13}{23}$ Feb. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Maurice of Nassau to Privy Coun-
 cil, $\frac{5}{15}$ March, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

land like a glass beneath his feet. Having nothing but religion in his mouth, and protecting himself with the Queen's name, he had been exciting all the cities of North Holland to rebellion, and bringing the poor people to destruction. He had been offered money enough to satisfy the most avaricious soldier in the world, but he stood out for six years' full pay for his soldiers, a demand with which it was impossible to comply. It was necessary to prevent him from inundating the land and destroying the estates of the country gentlemen and the peasants. "This, gentlemen," said Maurice, "is the plain truth ; nor do I believe that you will sustain against me a man who was under such vast obligations to my late father, and who requites his debt by daring to speak of myself as a rascal ; or that you will countenance his rebellion against a country to which he brought only his cloak and sword, and whence he has filched one hundred thousand crowns. You will not, I am sure, permit a simple captain, by his insubordination, to cause such mischief, and to set on fire this and other Provinces.

"If, by your advice," continued the Count, "the Queen should appoint fitting personages to office here—men who know what honour is, born of illustrious and noble race, or who by their great virtue have been elevated to the honours of the kingdom—to them I will render an account of my actions. And it shall appear that I have more ability and more desire to do my duty to her Majesty than those who render her lip-service only, and only make use of her sacred name to fill their purses, while I and mine have been ever ready to employ our lives, and what remains of our fortunes, in the cause of God, her Majesty, and our country."¹

Certainly no man had a better right to speak with consciousness of the worth of race than the son of William the Silent, the nephew of Lewis, Adolphus, and Henry of Nassau, who had all laid down their lives for the liberty of their country. But Elizabeth continued to threaten the States-General, through the mouth of Willoughby, with the loss of

¹ Maurice of Nassau to Privy Council, MS. last cited.

her protection, if they should continue thus to requite her favours with ingratitude and insubordination :¹ and Maurice once more respectfully but firmly replied that Sonoy's rebellion could not and would not be tolerated ; appealing boldly to her sense of justice, which was the noblest attribute of kings.²

At last the Queen informed Willoughby, that—as the cause of Sonoy's course seemed to be his oath of obedience to Leicester, whose resignation of office had not yet been received in the Netherlands—she had now ordered Councillor Killigrew to communicate the fact of that resignation. She also wrote to Sonoy, requiring him to obey the States and Count Maurice, and to accept a fresh commission from them, or at least to surrender Medenblik, and to fulfil all their orders with zeal and docility.³

This act of abdication by Leicester, which had been received on the 22nd of January by the English envoy, Herbert, at the moment of his departure from the Netherlands, had been carried back by him to England, on the ground that its communication to the States at that moment would cause him inconveniently to *postpone his journey*. It never officially reached the States-General until the 31st of March, so that this most dangerous crisis was protracted nearly five months long—certainly without necessity or excuse—and whether through design, malice, wantonness, or incomprehensible carelessness, it is difficult to say.⁴

So soon as the news reached Sonoy, that contumacious chieftain found his position untenable, and he allowed the States' troops to take possession of Medenblik, and with it the important territory of North Holland, of which province

¹ Queen to Willoughby, $\frac{5}{15}$ March, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Maurice of Nassau to Queen Elizabeth, 15 March, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Queen to Willoughby, $\frac{17}{21}$ March, 1588. Queen to Sonoy, $\frac{5}{15}$ April, 1588, (S. P. Office MSS.)

⁴ Bor, III. xxiv. 179, *seq.* 233, *seq.*

Van der Kemp, I. 62. Wagenaar, viii. 270. Resol. Holl. 1 April, 1588.

This business of Col. Diedrich Sonoy occupies an enormous space in the archives and chronicles of the day. It has been here reduced to the smallest compass consistent with a purpose of presenting an intelligible account of the politics of Leicester's administration and its consequences.

Maurice now saw himself undisputed governor. Sonoy was in the course of the summer deprived of all office, and betook himself to England. Here he was kindly received by the Queen, who bestowed upon him a ruined tower, and a swamp among the fens of Lincolnshire. He brought over some of his countrymen, well-skilled in such operations, set himself to draining and dyking, and hoped to find himself at home and comfortable in his ruined tower. But unfortunately, as neither he nor his wife, notwithstanding their English proclivities, could speak a word of the language, they found their social enjoyments very limited. Moreover, as his work-people were equally without the power of making their wants understood, the dyking operations made but little progress. So the unlucky colonel soon abandoned his swamp, and retired to East Friesland, where he lived a morose and melancholy life on a pension of one thousand florins, granted him by the States of Holland, until the year 1597, when he lost his mind, fell into the fire, and thus perished.¹

And thus, in the Netherlands, through hollow negotiations between enemies and ill-timed bickerings among friends, the path of Philip and Parma had been made comparatively smooth during the spring and early summer of 1588. What was the aspect of affairs in Germany and France?

The adroit capture of Bonn by Martin Schenk had given much trouble. Parma was obliged to detach a strong force, under Prince Chimay,² to attempt the recovery of that important place, which—so long as it remained in the power of the States—rendered the whole electorate insecure and a source of danger to the Spanish party. Farnese endeavoured in vain to win back the famous partizan by most liberal offers, for he felt bitterly the mistake he had made in alienating so formidable a freebooter. But the truculent Martin remained obdurate and irascible. Philip, much offended that the news of his decease had proved false, ordered rather than requested the Emperor Rudolph to have a care that nothing was done

¹ Bor, III. 290.

² Parma to Philip II. 31 Jan. 1588. (Arch de Sim. MS.)

in Germany to interfere with the great design upon England.¹ The King gave warning that he would suffer no disturbance from that quarter, but certainly the lethargic condition of Germany rendered such threats superfluous. There were riders enough, and musketeers enough, to be sold to the highest bidder. German food for powder was offered largely in the market to any foreign consumer, for the trade in their subjects' lives was ever a prolific source of revenue to the petty sovereigns—numerous as the days of the year—who owned Germany and the Germans.

The mercenaries who had so recently been making their inglorious campaign in France had been excluded from that country at the close of 1587, and furious were the denunciations of the pulpits and the populace of Paris that the foreign brigands who had been devastating the soil of France, and attempting to oppose the decrees of the Holy Father of Rome, should have made their escape so easily. Rabid Linestre and other priests and monks foamed with rage, as they execrated and anathematized the devil-worshipper Henry of Valois, in all the churches of that monarch's capital. The Spanish ducats were flying about, more profusely than ever, among the butchers and porters, and fishwomen, of the great city; and Madam League paraded herself in the daylight with still increasing insolence. There was scarcely a pretence at recognition of any authority, save that of Philip and Sixtus. France had become a wilderness—an uncultivated, barbarous province of Spain. Mucio-Guise had been secretly to Rome, had held interviews with the Pope and cardinals, and had come back with a sword presented by his Holiness, its hilt adorned with jewels, and its blade engraved with tongues of fire.² And with this flaming sword the avenging messenger of the holy father was to smite the wicked, and to drive them into outer darkness.

And there had been fresh conferences among the chiefs of the sacred League within the Lorraine territory, and it was

¹ Philip II. to Parma, 24 April, 1588. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

² 'L'Estoile,' 236.

resolved to require of the Valois an immediate extermination of heresy and heretics throughout the kingdom, the publication of the Council of Trent, and the formal establishment of the Holy Inquisition in every province of France. Thus, while doing his Spanish master's bidding, the great Lieutenant of the league might, if he was adroit enough to outwit Philip, ultimately carve out a throne for himself.

Yet Philip felt occasional pangs of uneasiness lest there should, after all, be peace in France, and lest his schemes against Holland and England might be interfered with from that quarter. Even Farnese, nearer the scene, could not feel completely secure that a sudden reconciliation among contending factions might not give rise to a dangerous inroad across the Flemish border. So Guise was plied more vigorously than ever by the Duke with advice and encouragement, and assisted with such Walloon carabineers as could be spared,¹ while large subsidies and larger promises came from Philip,² whose prudent policy was never to pay excessive sums, until the work contracted for was done. "Mucio must do the job long since agreed upon," said Philip to Farnese, "and you and Mendoza must see that he prevents the King of France from troubling me in my enterprize against England."³ If the unlucky Henry III. had retained one spark of intelligence, he would have seen that his only

¹ Herrera III. iii. 72. 2,000 infantry and 1,000 horse.

² Philip to Parma, 27 Nov. 1587. Same to same, 29 Jan. 1588. (Arch. de Sim. MSS.)

³ Philip to Parma, 24 April, 1588. (Arch. de Sim. MS.) Philip II. to Mendoza, 16 Feb. 1588. (Arch. de Sim. [Paris.] MS.)

"A Mucio animad y aconsejad como soleys, lo que se cumple . . . y le procurad hazer tiro." Philip II. to Mendoza, 2 June, 1588. (Arch. de Simancas [Paris.] MS.)

"The King was, however, perpetually warning Guise not to allow himself or his confederates "to brag openly of the assistance which they were receiving from Spain, lest the ministers of Henry should think Philip partial;

but in reality not to waver a hair's breadth in his determination, relying upon the Spanish King and on the Duke of Parma," &c. Philip II. to Mendoza, 16 July, 1588. (Arch. de Sim. [Paris.] MS.)

"The public report that we are assisting Guise," said the king a year before, "is very inconvenient, and must be suppressed. . . . My nephew, the Duke of Parma, has assured Guise that he will assist him, and Guise ought to be grateful. At the same time Longlée has been telling me that his King desired to join me against England. All this was to deceive, and I have answered all with equal deception," &c. Philip II. to Mendoza, 6 July, 1587, MS.

chance of rescue lay in the arm of the Béarnese, and in an honest alliance with England. Yet so strong was his love for the monks, who were daily raving against him, that he was willing to commit any baseness, in order to win back their affection. He was ready to exterminate heresy and to establish the inquisition, but he was incapable of taking energetic measures of any kind, even when throne and life were in imminent peril. Moreover, he clung to Epernon and the '*politiques*,' in whose swords he alone found protection, and he knew that Epernon and the *politiques* were the objects of horror to Paris and to the League. At the same time he looked imploringly towards England and towards the great Huguenot chieftain, Elizabeth's knight-errant. He had a secret interview with Sir Edward Stafford, in the garden of the Bernardine convent, and importuned that envoy to implore the Queen to break off her negotiations with Philip, and even dared to offer the English ambassador a large reward, if such a result could be obtained. Stafford was also earnestly requested to beseech the Queen's influence with Henry of Navarre, that he should convert himself to Catholicism, and thus destroy the League.

On the other hand, the magniloquent Mendoza, who was fond of describing himself as "so violent and terrible to the French that they wished to be rid of him,"¹ had—as usual—been frightening the poor King, who, after a futile attempt at dignity, had shrunk before the blusterings of the ambassador. "This King," said Don Bernardino, "thought that he could impose upon me and silence me, by talking loud, but as I didn't talk softly to him, he has undeceived himself. . . . I have had another interview with him, and found him softer than silk, and he made me many caresses, and after I went out, he said that I was a very skilful minister."²

¹ "El serlo yo tan terrible, violento, y sedicioso, que impido no se estreche este rey muy de veras con V. Maj^d lo qual se heria si faltasse yo deste puesto." Mendoza to Philip II. 30 Jan. 1588. (Arch. de Sim, [Paris.] MS.)

² "Este rey creyo que me espantara hiziera callar con hallar me alto, y con el no respondalle yo baxo, se ha desengañado. Ha tenido despues audiencia, y halle lo mas blando que una seda, y me hizo muchas caricias

It was the purpose of the League to obtain possession of the King's person, and, if necessary, to dispose of the *politiques* by a general massacre, such as sixteen years before had been so successful in the case of Coligny and the Huguenots. So the populace—more rabid than ever—were impatient that their adored Balafre should come to Paris and begin the holy work.

He came as far as Gonesse to do the job he had promised to Philip, but having heard that Henry had reinforced himself with four thousand Swiss from the garrison of Lagny, he fell back to Soissons. The King sent him a most abject message, imploring him not to expose his sovereign to so much danger, by setting his foot at that moment in the capital. The Balafre hesitated, but the populace raved and roared for its darling. The Queen-Mother urged her unhappy son to yield his consent, and the Montpensier—fatal sister of Guise, with the famous scissors ever at her girdle¹—insisted that her brother had as good a right as any man to come to the city. Meantime the great chief of the *politiques*, the hated and insolent Epernon, had been appointed governor of Normandy, and Henry had accompanied his beloved minion a part of the way towards Rouen. A plot contrived by the Montpensier to waylay the monarch on his return, and to take him into the safe-keeping of the League, miscarried, for the King re-entered the city before the scheme was ripe. On the other hand, Nicholas Poulain, bought for twenty thousand crowns by the *politiques*, gave the King and his advisers full information of all these intrigues, and, standing in Henry's cabinet, offered, at peril of his life, if he might be confronted with the conspirators—the leaders of the League within the city—to prove the truth of the charges which he had made.²

For the whole city was now thoroughly organized. The

que yo le reconoci con las palabras devidas, y despues del salir de hablalle, entiendo que dixo que yo era un ministro bien avisé," &c. Don B. de Mendoza to Don Juan de Idiaquez, 5 April, 1588. (Arch. de Sim. [Paris.] MS.)

¹ 'L'Etoile,' 244.

² De Thou, x. L. 89, p. 251, *seq.* Herrera III. 118, *seq.* 'Procès verbal' de Nicolas Poulain, &c. 320-332. Apud 'L'Etoile, Registre Journal de Henry III.'

number of its districts had been reduced from sixteen to five, the better to bring it under the control of the League ; and, while it could not be denied that Mucio had been doing his master's work very thoroughly, yet it was still in the power of the King—through the treachery of Poulain—to strike a blow for life and freedom, before he was quite taken in the trap. But he stood helpless, paralyzed, gazing in dreamy stupor—like one fascinated—at the destruction awaiting him.

At last, one memorable May morning, a traveller alighted outside the gate of Saint Martin, and proceeded on foot 10th May, through the streets of Paris. He was wrapped in a 1588. large cloak, which he held carefully over his face. When he had got as far as the street of Saint Denis, a young gentleman among the passers by, a good Leaguer, accosted the stranger, and, with coarse pleasantry, plucked the cloak from his face, and the hat from his head. Looking at the handsome, swarthy features, marked with a deep scar, and the dark, dangerous eyes which were then revealed, the practical jester at once recognized in the simple traveller the terrible Balafré, and kissed the hem of his garments with submissive rapture. Shouts of “Vive Guise” rent the air from all the bystanders, as the Duke, no longer affecting concealment, proceeded with a slow and stately step toward the residence of Catharine de' Medici.¹ That queen of compromises and of magic had been holding many a conference with the leaders of both parties ; had been increasing her son's stupefaction by her enigmatical counsels ; had been anxiously consulting her talisman of goat's and human blood, mixed with metals melted under the influence of the star of her nativity, and had been daily visiting the wizard Ruggieri, in whose magic circle—peopled with a thousand fantastic heads—she had held high converse with the world of spirits, and derived much sound advice as to the true course of action to be pursued between her son and Philip, and between the politicians and the League. But, in spite of these various sources of in-

¹ 'L'Etoile,' 250. De Thou, *ubi sup.* 'Recit du Bourgeois de Paris.' MS. Dupuys, cited by Capetigue, 'Hist. de la Réforme,' &c. IV. 378.

struction, Catharine was somewhat perplexed, now that decisive action seemed necessary—a dethronement and a new massacre impending, and judicious compromise difficult. So after a hurried conversation with Mucio, who insisted on an interview with the King, she set forth for the Louvre, the Duke lounging calmly by the side of her sedan chair, on foot, receiving the homage of the populace, as men, women, and children together, they swarmed around him as he walked, kissing his garments, and rending the air with their shouts.¹ For that wolfish mob of Paris, which had once lapped the blood of ten thousand Huguenots in a single night, and was again rabid with thirst, was most docile and fawning to the great Balafre. It grovelled before him, it hung upon his look, it licked his hand, and, at the lifting of his finger, or the glance of his eye, would have sprung at the throat of King or Queen-Mother, minister, or minion, and devoured them all before his eyes. It was longing for the sign, for much as Paris adored and was besotted with Guise and the League, even more, if possible, did it hate those godless politicians, who had grown fat on extortions from the poor, and who had converted their substance into the daily bread of luxury.

Nevertheless the city was full of armed men, Swiss and German mercenaries, and burgher guards, sworn to fidelity to the throne. The place might have been swept clean, at that moment, of rebels who were not yet armed or fortified in their positions. The Lord had delivered Guise into Henry's hands. "Oh, the madman!" cried Sixtus V., when he heard that the Duke had gone to Paris, "thus to put himself into the clutches of the King whom he had so deeply offended!" And, "Oh, the wretched coward, the imbecile!" he added, when he heard how the King had dealt with his great enemy.²

For the monarch was in his cabinet that May morning, irresolutely awaiting the announced visit of the Duke. By his side stood Alphonse Corse, attached as a mastiff to his master, and fearing not Guise nor Leaguer, man nor devil.

¹ De Thou, 'L'Etoile,' *ubi sup.*

² De Thou, x. 266.

"Sire, is the Duke of Guise your friend or enemy?" said Alphonse. The King answered by an expressive shrug.

"Say the word, Sire," continued Alphonse, "and I pledge myself to bring his head this instant, and lay it at your feet."¹

And he would have done it. Even at the side of Catharine's sedan chair, and in the very teeth of the worshipping mob, the Corsican would have had the Balafre's life, even though he laid down his own.

But Henry—irresolute and fascinated—said it was not yet time for such a blow.²

Soon afterward, the Duke was announced. The chief of the League and the last of the Valois met, face to face, but not for the last time. The interview was coldly respectful on the part of Mucio, anxious and embarrassed on that of the King. When the visit, which was merely one of ceremony, was over, the Duke departed as he came, receiving the renewed homage of the populace as he walked to his hotel.

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That night precautions were taken. All the guards were doubled around the palace and through the streets. The Hôtel de Ville and the Place de la Grève were made secure, and the whole city was filled with troops. But the Place Maubert was left unguarded, and a rabble rout—all night long—was collecting in that distant spot. Four companies
^{11th May,} of burgher-guards went over to the League at three
^{1588.} o'clock in the morning. The rest stood firm in the cemetery of the Innocents, awaiting the orders of the King. At day-break on the 11th the town was still quiet. There was an awful pause of expectation. The shops remained closed all the morning, the royal troops were drawn up in battle-array, upon the Grève and around the Hôtel de Ville, but they stood motionless as statues, until the populace began taunting them with cowardice, and then laughing them to scorn. For their sovereign lord and master still sat paralyzed in his palace.

¹ 'L'Etoile,' 248.

² Ibid.

The mob had been surging through all the streets and lanes, until, as by a single impulse, chains were stretched across the streets, and barricades thrown up in all the principal thoroughfares. About noon the Duke of Guise, who had been sitting quietly in his hotel, with a very few armed followers, came out into the street of the Hotel Montmorency, and walked calmly up and down, arm-in-arm with the Archbishop of Lyons, between a double hedge-row of spectators and admirers, three or four ranks thick. He was dressed in a white slashed doublet and hose, and wore a very large hat.¹ Shouts of triumph resounded from a thousand brazen throats, as he moved calmly about, receiving, at every instant, expresses from the great gathering in the Place Maubert.

"Enough, too much, my good friends," he said, taking off the great hat—"I don't know whether he was laughing in it," observed one who was looking on that day—"Enough of 'Long live Guise!' Cry 'Long live the King!'"²

There was no response, as might be expected, and the people shouted more hoarsely than ever for Madam League and the Balafre. The Duke's face was full of gaiety; there was not a shadow of anxiety upon it in that perilous and eventful moment. He saw that the day was his own.

For now, the people, ripe, ready, mustered, armed, barricaded, awaited but a signal to assault the King's mercenaries, before rushing to the palace. On every house-top missiles were provided to hurl upon their heads. There seemed no escape for Henry or his Germans from impending doom, when Guise, thoroughly triumphant, vouchsafed them their lives.

"You must give me these soldiers as a present, my friends," said he to the populace.

And so the armed Swiss, French, and German troopers and infantry, submitted to be led out of Paris, following with docility the aide-de-camp of Guise, Captain St. Paul, who walked quietly before them, with his sword in its scabbard, and directing their movements with a cane. Sixty of them were slain by the mob, who could not, even at the command

¹ 'L'Etoile,' 250.

² Ibid.

of their beloved chieftain, quite forego their expected banquet. But this was all the blood shed on the memorable day of Barricades, when another Bartholomew massacre had been expected.¹

Meantime, while Guise was making his promenade through the city, exchanging embraces with the rabble, and listening to the coarse congratulations and obscene jests of the porters and fishwomen, the poor King sat crying all day long in the Louvre. The Queen-Mother was with him, reproaching him bitterly with his irresolution and want of confidence in her, and scolding him for his tears. But the unlucky Henry only wept the more as he cowered in a corner.

"These are idle tears," said Catharine. "This is no time for crying. And for myself, though women weep so easily, I feel my heart too deeply wrung for tears. If they came to my eyes they would be tears of blood."²

Next day the last Valois walked out of the Louvre, as if for a promenade in the Tuileries, and proceeded straightway to the stalls, where his horse stood saddled. Du Halde, his equerry, buckled his master's spurs on, upside down. "No matter," said Henry, "I am not riding to see my mistress. I have a longer journey before me."³

And so, followed by a rabble rout of courtiers, without boots or cloaks, and mounted on sorry hacks—the King of France rode forth from his capital post-haste, and, turning as he left the gates, hurled back impotent imprecations upon Paris and its mob.⁴ Thenceforth, for a long interval, there was no king in that country. Mucio had done his work, and

¹ 'L'Estoile.' De Thou, 257-261. Herrera, *ubi sup.*

² "La Reyna Madre dizo al Rey quan mal avisado havia sido quedandosele de la poca confiança que tenia de ella, y que nunca la haria descubierto sus secretos, ni procurado su daño para executar semejante resolucion sin su parescer y esto con palabras de tanto sentimiento que el Rey se enternecio llorando, y ella le dizo ser lagrimas perdidas aquellas, por no ser

tiempo de llorar; que si bien las mugeres lo hazian tan facilmente, que ella tenia tan zerrado el pecho que no podria llorar, y que si la viniessen a los ojos lagrimas, serian de sangre." Relacion de lo subcedido à Paris desde los 9 hasta 13 de Mayo, 1588. (Arch. de Sim. [Paris.] MS.)

³ 'L'Estoile,' 252.

⁴ L'Estoile, De Thou, Herrera, *ubi sup.* Pasquier, vol. ii., lettre iv., 331-334 (ed. 1723).

earned his wages, and Philip II. reigned in Paris. The commands of the League were now complied with. Heretics were doomed to extermination. The edict of 19th July, 1588, was published with the most exclusive ^{19th July, 1588,} and stringent provisions that the most bitter Romanist could imagine,¹ and, as a fair beginning, two young girls, daughters of Jacques Forcade, once 'procureur au parlement,' were burned in Paris, for the crime of Protestantism.²

The Duke of Guise was named Generalissimo of the Kingdom (26th August, 1588). Henry gave in his submission to the Council of Trent, the edicts, the Inquisition, and the rest of the League's infernal machinery, and was formally reconciled to Guise, with how much sincerity time was soon to show.³

Meantime Philip, for whom and at whose expense all this work had been done by the hands of the faithful Mucio, was constantly assuring his royal brother of France, through envoy Longlée, at Madrid, of his most affectionate friendship, and utterly repudiating all knowledge of these troublesome and dangerous plots. Yet they had been especially organized—as we have seen—by himself and the Balafre, in order that France might be kept a prey to civil war, and thus rendered incapable of offering any obstruction to his great enterprise against England. Any complicity of Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador in Paris, or of the Duke of Parma, who were important agents in all these proceedings, with the Duke of Guise, was strenuously and circumstantially denied; and the Balafre, on the day of the barricades, sent Brissac to Elizabeth's envoy, Sir Edward Stafford, to assure him as to his personal safety, and as to the deep affection with which England and its Queen were regarded by himself and all his

¹ The King bound himself by oath to extirpate heresy, to remove all persons suspected of that crime from office, and never to lay down arms so long as a single heretic remained. By secret articles, two armies against the Huguenots were agreed upon, one under the Duke of Mayenne, the other under some general to be appointed by the King. The Council of Trent was forthwith to be proclaimed, and by a re-

finement of malice the League stipulated that all officers appointed in Paris by the Duke of Guise on the day after the barricades should resign their powers, and be immediately re-appointed by the King himself. De Thou, x. l. 86, pp. 324-325.

² Duplessis Mornay, iv. 246. 'L'Estoile,' 258.

³ De Thou, *ubi sup.*

friends. Stafford had also been advised to accept a guard for his house of embassy. His reply was noble.

"I represent the majesty of England," he said, "and can take no safeguard from a subject of the sovereign to whom I am accredited."

To the threat of being invaded, and to the advice to close his gates, he answered, "Do you see these two doors? Know then, if I am attacked, I am determined to defend myself to the last drop of my blood, to serve as an example to the universe of the law of nations, violated in my person. Do not imagine that I shall follow your advice. The gates of an ambassador shall be open to all the world."

Brissac returned with this answer to Guise, who saw that it was hopeless to attempt making a display in the eyes of Queen Elizabeth, but gave private orders that the ambassador should not be molested.¹

Such were the consequences of the day of the barricades—and thus the path of Philip was cleared of all obstructions on the part of France. His Mucio was now generalissimo. Henry was virtually deposed. Henry of Navarre, poor and good-humoured as ever; was scarcely so formidable at that moment as he might one day become. When the news of the day of barricades was brought at night to that cheerful monarch, he started from his couch. "Ha," he exclaimed with a laugh, "but they haven't yet caught the Béarnese!"²

And it might be long before the League would catch the Béarnese; but, meantime, he could render slight assistance to Queen Elizabeth.

In England there had been much fruitless negotiation between the government of that country and the commissioners from the States-General. There was perpetual altercation on the subject of Utrecht, Leyden, Sonoy, and the other causes of contention; the Queen—as usual—being imperious and choleric, and the envoys, in her opinion, very insolent. But the

¹ De Thou, x. 264-266.

² "Estant couché sur son lit vert il se leva, et tout gaiment dit ces mots;

'Ils ne tienment encore le Béarnois.'"
'L'Estoile,' 252.

principal topic of discussion was the peace-negotiations, which the States-General, both at home and through their delegation in England, had been doing their best to prevent ; steadily refusing her Majesty's demand that commissioners, on their part, should be appointed to participate in the conferences at Ostend. Elizabeth promised that there should be as strict regard paid to the interests of Holland as to those of England, in case of a pacification, and that she would never forget her duty to them, to herself, and to the world, as the protectress of the reformed religion. The deputies, on the other hand, warned her that peace with Spain was impossible ; that the intention of the Spanish court was to deceive her, while preparing her destruction and theirs ; that it was hopeless to attempt the concession of any freedom of conscience from Philip II. ; and that any stipulations which might be made upon that, or any other subject, by the Spanish commissioners, would be tossed to the wind. In reply to the Queen's loud complaints that the States had been trifling with her, and undutiful to her, and that they had kept her waiting seven months long for an answer to her summons to participate in the negotiations, they replied, that up to the 15th October of the previous year, although there had been flying rumours of an intention on the part of her Majesty's government to open those communications with the enemy, it had, "nevertheless been earnestly and expressly, and with high words and oaths, denied that there was any truth in those rumours." Since that time the States had not once only, but many times, in private letters, in public documents, and in conversations with Lord Leicester and other eminent personages, deprecated any communications whatever with Spain, asserting uniformly their conviction that such proceedings would bring ruin on their country, and imploring her Majesty not to give ear to any propositions whatever.¹

And not only were the envoys, regularly appointed by the States-General, most active in England, in their attempts to

¹ Bor, III. xxiv. 223.

prevent the negotiations, but delegates from the Netherland churches were also sent to the Queen, to reason with her on the subject, and to utter solemn warnings that the cause of the reformed religion would be lost for ever, in case of a treaty on her part with Spain. When these clerical envoys reached England the Queen was already beginning to wake from her delusion ; although her commissioners were still—as we have seen—hard at work, pouring sand through their sieves at Ostend, and although the steady protestations of the Duke of Parma, and the industrious circulation of falsehoods by Spanish emissaries, had even caused her wisest statesmen, for a time, to participate in that delusion.

For it is not so great an impeachment on the sagacity of the great Queen of England, as it would now appear to those who judge by the light of subsequent facts, that she still doubted whether the armaments, notoriously preparing in Spain and Flanders, were intended against herself ; and that—even if such were the case—she still believed in the possibility of averting the danger by negotiation.

So late as the beginning of May, even the far-seeing and anxious Walsingham could say, that in England “they were doing nothing but honouring St. George, of whom the Spanish Armada seemed to be afraid. We hear,” he added, “that they will not be ready to set forward before the midst of May, but I trust *that it will be May come twelvemonths*. The King of Spain *is too old and too sickly to fall to conquer kingdoms*. If he be well counselled, his best course will be to settle his own kingdoms in his own hands.”¹

And even much later, in the middle of July—when the mask was hardly maintained—even then there was no certainty as to the movements of the Armada ; and Walsingham believed, just ten days before the famous fleet was to appear off Plymouth, that it had dispersed and returned to

¹ Walsingham to Sir Ed. Norris,
22 April, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² May, “By the middle of July,” says

Stowe, “it was said by some of honourable rank and great judgment, that the whole fleet of the invasion was a Popish brag and a French tale.” 75d

Spain, never to re-appear.¹ As to Parma's intentions, they were thought to lie rather in the direction of Ostend than of England; and Elizabeth, on the 20th July, was more anxious for that city than for her own kingdom. "Mr. Ned, I am persuaded," she wrote to Norris, "that if the Spanish fleet break, the Prince of Parma's enterprise for England will fall to the ground, and then are you to look to Ostend. Haste your works."²

All through the spring and early summer, Stafford, in Paris, was kept in a state of much perplexity as to the designs of Spain—so contradictory were the stories circulated, and so bewildering the actions of men known to be hostile to England. In the last days of April he intimated it as a common opinion in Paris, that these naval preparations of Philip were an elaborate farce; "that the great elephant would bring forth but a mouse; that the great processions, prayers, and pardons, at Rome, for the prosperous success of the Armada against England, would be of no effect; that the King of Spain was laughing in his sleeve at the Pope, that he could make such a fool of him; and that such an enterprise was a thing the King never durst think of in deed, but only in show to feed the world."³

Thus, although furnished with minute details as to these armaments, and as to the exact designs of Spain against his country, by the ostentatious statements of the Spanish ambassador in Paris himself, the English envoy was still inclined to believe that these statements were a figment, expressly intended to deceive. Yet he was aware that Lord Westmoreland, Lord Paget, Sir Charles Paget, Morgan, and other English refugees, were constantly meeting with Mendoza, that they

¹ Walsingham to E. Norris, $\frac{9}{19}$ July, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

"And for the navy of Spain, we have lately received advertisements that by reason of their great wants, as well of mariners, as of necessary provisions, but especially through the infection fallen among their men, they are forced

to return, and have dispersed themselves." (1)

² Leicester to E. Norris. MS. by Queen Elizabeth (?) $\frac{10}{20}$ July, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Sir E. Stafford to Walsingham, $\frac{12}{22}$ April, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

were told to get themselves in readiness, and to go down—as well appointed as might be—to the Duke of Parma ; that they had been “sending for their tailor to make them apparel, and to put themselves in equipage ;” that, in particular, Westmoreland had been assured of being restored by Philip to his native country in better condition than before. The Catholic and Spanish party in Paris were however much dissatisfied with the news from Scotland, and were getting more and more afraid that King James would object to the Spaniards getting a foot-hold in his country, and that “the Scots would soon be playing them a Scottish trick.”¹

Stafford was plunged still more inextricably into doubt by the accounts from Longlée in Madrid.² The diplomatist, who had been completely convinced by Philip as to his innocence of any participation in the criminal enterprise of Guise against Henry III., was now almost staggered by the unscrupulous mendacity of that monarch with regard to any supposed designs against England. Although the Armada was to be ready by the 15th May, Longlée was of opinion—notwithstanding many bold announcements of an attack upon Elizabeth—that the real object of the expedition was America. There had recently been discovered, it was said, “a new country, more rich in gold and silver than any yet found, but so full of stout people that they could not master them.”³ To reduce these stout people beyond the Atlantic, therefore, and to get possession of new gold mines, was the real object at which Philip was driving, and Longlée and Stafford were both very doubtful whether it were worth the Queen’s while to exhaust her finances in order to protect herself against an imaginary invasion. Even so late as *the middle of July, six to one was offered* on the Paris exchange that the Spanish fleet would never be seen in the English seas, and those that

¹ Stafford to Walsingham, $\frac{24 \text{ April}}{4 \text{ May}}$ 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Dépêches de Longlée envoyé de Henri III. en Espagne, Mars, Avril,

Mai, 1588. Fonds St. Germain. (Bib. Imp. de France, MS.)

³ Stafford to Walsingham, $\frac{24 \text{ April}}{4 \text{ May}}$ 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

offered the bets were known to be well-wishers to the Spanish party.¹

Thus sharp diplomatists and statesmen like Longlée, Stafford, and Walsingham, were beginning to lose their fear of the great bugbear by which England had so long been haunted. It was therefore no deep stain on the Queen's sagacity that that she, too, was willing to place credence in the plighted honour of Alexander Farnese, the great prince who prided himself on his sincerity, and who, next to the King his master, adored the virgin Queen of England.

The deputies of the Netherland churches had come, with the permission of Count Maurice and of the States General ; but they represented more strongly than any other envoys could do, the English and the monarchical party. They were instructed especially to implore the Queen to accept the sovereignty of their country ; to assure her that the restoration of Philip—who had been a wolf instead of a shepherd to his flock—was an impossibility, that he had been solemnly and for ever deposed, that under her sceptre only could the Provinces ever recover their ancient prosperity ; that ancient and modern history alike made it manifest that a free republic could never maintain itself, but that it must, of necessity, run its course through sedition, bloodshed, and anarchy, until liberty was at last crushed by an absolute despotism ; that equality of condition, the basis of democratic institutions, could never be made firm ; and that a fortunate exception, like that of Switzerland, whose historical and political circumstances were peculiar, could never serve as a model to the Netherlands, accustomed as those Provinces had ever been to a monarchical form of government ; and that the antagonism of aristocratic and democratic elements in the States had already produced discord, and was threatening destruction to the whole country. To avert such dangers the splendour of royal authority was necessary, according to the venerable commands of Holy Writ ; and therefore the Nether-

¹ Stafford to Walsingham, $\frac{3}{13}$ July, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

land churches acknowledged themselves the foster-children of England, and begged that in political matters also the inhabitants of the Provinces might be accepted as the subjects of her Majesty. They also implored the Queen to break off these accursed negotiations with Spain, and to provide that henceforth in the Netherlands the reformed religion might be freely exercised, *to the exclusion of any other.*"¹

Thus it was very evident that these clerical envoys, although they were sent by permission of the States, did not come as the representatives of the dominant party. For that 'Beelzebub,' Barneveld, had different notions from theirs as to the possibility of a republic, and as to the propriety of tolerating other forms of worship than his own. But it was for such pernicious doctrines, on religious matters in particular, that he was called Beelzebub, Pope John, a papist in disguise, and an atheist; and denounced, as leading young Maurice and the whole country to destruction.

On the basis of these instructions, the deputies drew up a memorial of pitiless length, filled with astounding
^{12 July,}
^{1588.} parallels between their own position and that of the Hebrews, Assyrians, and other distinguished nations of antiquity. They brought it to Walsingham on the 12th July, 1588, and the much-enduring man heard it read from beginning to end. He expressed his approbation of its sentiments, but said it was too long. It must be put on one sheet of paper, he said, if her Majesty was expected to read it.

"Moreover," said the Secretary of State, "although your arguments are full of piety, and your examples from Holy Writ very apt, I must tell you the plain truth. Great princes are not always so zealous in religious matters as they might be. Political transactions move them more deeply, and they depend too much on worldly things. However there is no longer much danger, for our envoys will return from Flanders in a few days."²

¹ Instructions from the Churches of the Netherlands for the Deputies to the Queen of England, apud Bor, III. 255-259.

² 'Report of the Deputies,' in Bor, III. 259.

"But," asked a deputy, "if the Spanish fleet does not succeed in its enterprise, will the peace-negotiations be renewed?"

"By no means," said Walsingham; "the Queen can never do that, consistently with her honour. They have scattered infamous libels against her—so scandalous, that you would be astounded should you read them. Arguments drawn from honour are more valid with princes than any other."

He alluded to the point in their memorial touching the free exercise of the reformed religion in the Provinces.

"'Tis well and piously said," he observed; "but princes and great lords are not always very earnest in such matters. I think that her Majesty's envoys will not press for the free exercise of the religion so very much; not more than for two or three years. By that time—should our negotiations succeed—the foreign troops will have evacuated the Netherlands on condition that the States-General shall settle the religious question."¹

"But," said Daniel de Dieu, one of the deputies, "*the majority of the States is Popish.*"

"Be it so," replied Sir Francis; "nevertheless they will sooner permit the exercise of the reformed religion than take up arms and begin the war anew."

He then alluded to the proposition of the deputies to exclude all religious worship but that of the reformed church—all false religion—as they expressed themselves.

"Her Majesty," said he, "is well disposed to permit some exercise of their religion to the Papists. So far as regards my own feelings, if we were now in the beginning of the reformation, and the papacy were still entire, I should willingly concede such exercise; but now that the Papacy has been overthrown, I think it would not be safe to give such permission. When we were disputing, at the time of the pacification of Ghent, whether the Popish religion should be partially permitted, the Prince of Orange *was of the affirmative opinion*;

¹ 'Report of the Deputies,' in Bor, last cited.

but I, who was then at Antwerp, entertained the contrary conviction."

"But," said one of the deputies—pleased to find that Walsingham was more of their way of thinking on religious toleration than the great Prince of Orange had been, or than Maurice and Barneveld then were—"but her Majesty will, we hope, follow the advice of her good and faithful counsellors."

"To tell you the truth," answered Sir Francis, "great princes are not always inspired with a sincere and upright zeal;"—it was the third time he had made this observation—"although, so far as regards the maintenance of the religion in the Netherlands, that is a matter of necessity. Of that there is no fear, since otherwise all the pious would depart, and none would remain but Papists, and, what is more, enemies of England. Therefore the Queen is aware that the religion must be maintained."¹

He then advised the deputies to hand in the memorial to her Majesty, without any long speeches, for which there was then no time or opportunity; and it was subsequently arranged that they should be presented to the Queen as she would be mounting her horse at St. James's to ride to Richmond.

Accordingly on the 15th July, as her Majesty came forth at the gate, with a throng of nobles and ladies—some about
 15 July, to accompany her and some bidding her adieu—the
 1588. deputies fell on their knees before her. Notwithstanding the advice of Walsingham, Daniel de Dieu was bent upon an oration.

"Oh illustrious Queen!" he began, "the churches of the United Netherlands——"

He had got no further, when the Queen, interrupting, exclaimed, "Oh! I beg you—at another time—I cannot now listen to a speech. Let me see the memorial."

Daniel de Dieu then humbly presented that document,

¹ 'Report of the Deputies' Bor, *ubi sup.*

which her Majesty graciously received, and then, getting on horseback, rode off to Richmond.¹

The memorial was in the nature of an exhortation to sustain the religion, and to keep clear of all negotiations with idolaters and unbelievers; and the memorialists supported themselves by copious references to Deuteronomy, Proverbs, Isaiah, Timothy, and Psalms, relying mainly on the case of Jehoshaphat, who came to disgrace and disaster through his treaty with the idolatrous King Ahab. With regard to any composition with Spain, they observed, in homely language, that a burnt cat fears the fire; and they assured the Queen that, by following their advice, she would gain a glorious and immortal name, like those of David, Ezekiel, Josiah, and others, whose fragrant memory, even as precious incense from the apothecary's, endureth to the end of the world.²

It was not surprising that Elizabeth, getting on horseback on the 15th July, 1588, with her head full of Tilbury Fort and Medina Sidonia, should have as little relish for the affairs of Ahab and Jehoshaphat, as for those melting speeches of Diomedes and of Turnus, to which Dr. Valentine Dale on his part was at that moment invoking her attention.

On the 20th July, the deputies were informed by Leicester that her Majesty would grant them an interview, July 20, and that they must come into his quarter of the ^{1588.} palace and await her arrival.

Between six and seven in the evening she came into the throne-room, and the deputies again fell on their knees before her.³

She then seated herself—the deputies remaining on their knees on her right side and the Earl of Leicester standing at her left—and proceeded to make many remarks touching her earnestness in the pending negotiations to provide for their religious freedom. It seemed that she must have received a hint from Walsingham on the subject.

¹ 'Report of the Deputies,' 259, 260-262.

² 'Memorial from the United

Churches,' &c., apud Bor, III. 260-262, *seq.*

³ Bor, III. 262, 263.

"I shall provide," she said, "for the maintenance of the reformed worship."

De Dieu.—"The enemy will never concede it."

The Queen.—"I think differently."

De Dieu.—"There is no place within his dominions where he has permitted the exercise of the pure religion. He has never done so."

The Queen.—"He conceded it in the pacification of Ghent."

De Dieu.—"But he did not keep his agreement. Don John had concluded with the States, but said he was not held to his promise, in case he should repent; and the King wrote afterwards to our States, and said that he was no longer bound to his pledge."

The Queen.—"That is quite another thing."

De Dieu.—"He has very often broken his faith."

The Queen.—"He shall no longer be allowed to do so. If he does not keep his word, that is my affair, not yours. It is my business to find the remedy. Men would say, see in what a desolation the Queen of England has brought this poor people. As to the freedom of worship, I should have proposed three or four years' interval—leaving it afterwards to the decision of the States."

De Dieu.—"But the majority of the States is Popish."

The Queen.—"I mean the States-General, not the States of any particular Province."

De Dieu.—"The greater part of the States-General is Popish."

The Queen.—"I mean the three estates—the clergy, the nobles, and the cities." The Queen—as the deputies observed—here fell into an error. She thought that prelates of the reformed Church, as in England, had seats in the States-General. Daniel de Dieu explained that they had no such position.

The Queen.—"Then how were you sent hither?"

De Dieu.—"We came with the consent of Count Maurice of Nassau."

The Queen.—"And of the States?"

De Dieu.—“ We came with their knowledge.”

The Queen.—“ Are you sent only from Holland and Zealand ? Is there no envoy from Utrecht and the other Provinces ? ”

Helmichius.—“ We two,” pointing to his colleague Sossingius, “ are from Utrecht.”

The Queen.—“ What ? Is this young man also a minister ? ” She meant Helmichius, who had a very little beard, and looked young.

Sossingius.—“ He is not so young as he looks.”

The Queen.—“ Youths are sometimes as able as old men.”

De Dieu.—“ I have heard our brother preach in France more than fourteen years ago.”

The Queen.—“ He must have begun young. How old were you when you first became a preacher ? ”

Helmichius.—“ Twenty-three or twenty-four years of age.”

The Queen.—“ It was with us, at first, considered a scandal that a man so young as that should be admitted to the pulpit. Our antagonists reproached us with it in a book, called ‘ Scandale de l’Angleterre,’ saying that we had none but school-boys for ministers. I understand that you pray for me as warmly as if I were your sovereign princess. I think I have done as much for the religion as if I were your Queen.”

Helmichius.—“ We are far from thinking otherwise. We acknowledge willingly your Majesty’s benefits to our churches.”

The Queen.—“ It would else be ingratitude on your part.”

Helmichius.—“ But the King of Spain will never keep any promise about the religion.”

The Queen.—“ He will never come so far : he does nothing but make a noise on all sides. Item, I don’t think he has much confidence in himself.”

De Dieu.—“ Your Majesty has many enemies. The Lord hath hitherto supported you, and we pray that he may continue to uphold your Majesty.”

The Queen.—“ I have indeed many enemies ; but I make no great account of them. Is there anything else you seek ? ”

De Dieu.—“ There is a special point : it concerns our, or

rather your Majesty's, city of Flushing. We hope that Russelius—(so he called Sir William Russell)—may be continued in its government, although he wishes his discharge."

"Aha !" said the Queen, laughing and rising from her seat, "I shall not answer you ; I shall call some one else to answer you."

She then summoned Russell's sister, Lady Warwick.

"If you could speak French," said the Queen to that gentlewoman, "I should bid you reply to these gentlemen, who beg that your brother may remain in Flushing, so very agreeable has he made himself to them."

The Queen was pleased to hear this good opinion of Sir William, and this request that he might continue to be governor of Flushing, because he had uniformly supported the Leicester party, and was at that moment in high quarrel with Count Maurice and the leading members of the States.

As the deputies took their leave, they requested an answer to their memorial, which was graciously promised.¹

Three days afterwards, 23rd July, Walsingham gave them a written answer to their memorial—conceived in the same
 23 July, sense as had been the expressions of her Majesty
 1588. and her counsellors. Support to the Netherlands and stipulations for the free exercise of their religion were promised ; but it was impossible for these deputies of the churches to obtain a guarantee from England that the Popish religion should be excluded from the Provinces, in case of a successful issue to the Queen's negotiation with Spain.²

And thus during all those eventful days—the *last weeks of July and the first weeks of August*—the clerical deputation remained in England, indulging in voluminous protocols and lengthened conversations with the Queen and the principal members of her government. It is astonishing, in that breathless interval of history, that so much time could be found for quill-driving and oratory.

Nevertheless, both in Holland and England, there had been

¹ 'Report of the Deputies of the Netherland Churches,' in Bor, III. 262, seq.

² 'Report,' &c. *ubi sup.*

other work than protocolling. One throb of patriotism moved the breast of both nations. A longing to grapple, once for all, with the great enemy of civil and religious liberty inspired both. In Holland, the States-General and all the men to whom the people looked for guidance, had been long deprecating the peace-negotiations. Extraordinary supplies—more than had ever been granted before—were voted for the expenses of the campaign; and Maurice of Nassau, fitly embodying the warlike tendencies of his country and race, had been most importunate with Queen Elizabeth that she would accept his services and his advice.¹ Armed vessels of every size, from the gun-boat to the galleon of 1200 tons—then the most imposing ship in those waters—swarmed in all the estuaries and rivers, and along the Dutch and Flemish coast, bidding defiance to Parma and his armaments; and offers of a large contingent from the fleets of Joost de Moor and Justinus de Nassau, to serve under Seymour and Howard, were freely made by the States-General.

It was decided early in July, by the board of admiralty, presided over by Prince Maurice, that the largest square-rigged vessels of Holland and Zeeland should cruise between England and the Flemish coast, outside the banks; that a squadron of lesser ships should be stationed within the banks; and that a fleet of sloops and fly-boats should hover close in shore, about Flushing and Rammekens. All the war-vessels of the little republic were thus fully employed. But, besides this arrangement, Maurice was empowered to lay an embargo—under what penalty he chose and during his pleasure—on all square-rigged vessels over 300 tons, in order that there might be an additional supply in case of need. Ninety ships of war under Warmond, admiral, and Van der Does, vice-admiral of Holland; and Justinus de Nassau, admiral, and Joost de Moor, vice-admiral of Zeeland; together with fifty merchant-vessels of the best and strongest, equipped and armed for active service, composed a formidable fleet.²

¹ Bor, III. 318, 319.

² So soon as the Sonoy difficulty | by which so much mischief had been created should be terminated, Maurice

The States-General, a month before, had sent twenty-five or thirty good ships, under Admiral Rosendaël, to join Lord Henry Seymour, then cruising between Dover and Calais. A tempest drove them back; and their absence from Lord Henry's fleet being misinterpreted by the English, the States were censured for ingratitude and want of good faith. But the injustice of the accusation was soon made manifest, for these vessels, reinforcing the great Dutch fleet outside the banks, did better service than they could have done in the straits. A squadron of strong well-armed vessels, having on board, in addition to their regular equipment, a picked force of twelve hundred musketeers, long accustomed to this peculiar kind of naval warfare, with crews of grim Zeelanders, who had faced Alva and Valdez in their day, now kept close watch over Farnese, determined that he should never thrust his face out of any haven or nook on the coast so long as they should be in existence to prevent him.¹

And in England the protracted diplomacy at Ostend, ill-timed though it was, had not paralyzed the arm or chilled the heart of the nation. When the great Queen, arousing herself from the delusion in which the falsehoods of Farnese and of Philip had lulled her, should once more represent—as no man or woman better than Elizabeth Tudor could represent—the defiance of England to foreign insolence; the resolve of a whole people to die rather than yield; there was a thrill of joy through the national heart. When the enforced restraint was at last taken off, there was one bound towards the enemy. Few more magnificent spectacles have been seen in history than the enthusiasm which pervaded the

announced his intention to the Queen, "à combattre l'ennemi par mer et par terre, pour l'empêcher qu'il ne prenne terre." "Je supplie V. M.," he continued, "de commander à M. l'admiral Howard de tenir correspondance avec moi, comme aussi je ferai avec Sa Seign^{te}." Maurice de Nassau to the Queen, ²⁰/₃₀ April, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

"Ne pouvant, pour mon devoir

vous celer qu'un des plus grands empêchemens que je trouve en nos affaires de pardeça est cette negotiation de paix qui engendre de telles confusions que les forces ne peuvent être employées par mer et par terre si tôt et si bien que je désirerai. Je ferai toute fois toute diligence d'être prest assez à temps pour rompre les desseins du Duc de Parma," &c. Same to same, same date.

¹ Bor, III. xxiii. 319-321.

country as the great danger, so long deferred, was felt at last to be closely approaching. The little nation of four millions, the merry England of the sixteenth century, went forward to the death-grapple with its gigantic antagonist as cheerfully as to a long-expected holiday. Spain was a vast empire, overshadowing the world; England, in comparison, but a province; yet nothing could surpass the steadiness with which the conflict was awaited.

For, during all the months of suspense, the soldiers and sailors, and many statesmen of England, had deprecated, even as the Hollanders had been doing, the dangerous delays of Ostend. Elizabeth was not embodying the national instinct, when she talked of peace, and shrank penuriously from the expenses of war. There was much disappointment, even indignation, at the slothfulness with which the preparations for defence went on, during the period when there was yet time to make them. It was feared with justice that England, utterly unfortified as were its cities, and defended only by its little navy without, and by untaught enthusiasm within, might, after all, prove an easier conquest than Holland and Zeeland, every town in whose territory bristled with fortifications. If the English ships—well-trained and swift sailors as they were—were unprovided with spars and cordage, beef and biscuit, powder and shot, and the militia-men, however enthusiastic, were neither drilled nor armed, was it so very certain, after all, that successful resistance would be made to the great Armada, and to the veteran pikemen and musketeers of Farnese, seasoned on a hundred battle-fields, and equipped as for a tournament? There was generous confidence and chivalrous loyalty on the part of Elizabeth's naval and military commanders; but there had been deep regret and disappointment at her course.

Hawkins was anxious, all through the winter and spring, to cruise with a small squadron off the coast of Spain. With a dozen vessels he undertook to "distress anything that went through the seas." The cost of such a squadron, with eighteen hundred men, to be relieved every four months, he estimated at

two thousand seven hundred pounds sterling the month, or a shilling a day for each man ; and it would be a very unlucky month, he said, in which they did not make captures to three times that amount ; for they would see nothing that would not be presently their own. " We might have peace, but not with God," said the pious old slave-trader ; " but rather than serve Baal, let us die a thousand deaths. Let us have open war with these Jesuits, and every man will contribute, fight, devise, or do, for the liberty of our country."¹

And it was open war with the Jesuits for which those stout-hearted sailors longed. All were afraid of secret mischief. The diplomatists — who were known to be flitting about France, Flanders, Scotland, and England, were birds of ill omen. King James was beset by a thousand bribes and expostulations to avenge his mother's death ; and although that mother had murdered his father, and done her best to disinherit himself, yet it was feared that Spanish ducats might induce him to be true to his mother's revenge, and false to the reformed religion.² Nothing of good was hoped for from France. " For my part," said Lord Admiral Howard, " I have made of the French King, the Scottish King, and the King of Spain, a trinity that I mean never to trust to be saved by, and I would that others were of my opinion."³

The noble sailor, on whom so much responsibility rested, yet who was so trammelled and thwarted by the timid and parsimonious policy of Elizabeth and of Burghley, chafed and shook his chains like a captive. " Since England was England," he exclaimed, " there was never such a stratagem and mask to deceive her as this treaty of peace. I pray God that

¹ Hawkins to Walsingham, $\frac{1}{11}$ Feb.

1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² En hora buena ayen llegado al Conde de Morton y Coronel Semple," says Philip, speaking of one of the hundred attempts of the Scotch Catholics employed by him to bring about a co-operation on the part of James with the Spanish designs upon England, " aunque segun los avisos que embiastes de Inglaterra menos

frutos haran que se prometian, pues tienen hereeses al Rey tan de su mano. Pero bien es que hagais las diligencias que se pueden, tentando si la sangre de su madre le estimola a la vengança," &c. Philip II. to Mendoza, 21 June, 1588. (Arch. de Simancas [in the Arch. de l'Empire, at Paris], MS.)

³ Howard to Walsingham, $\frac{27}{6}$ Jan.

1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

we do not curse for this a long grey beard with a white head witless, that will make all the world think us heartless. You know whom I mean."¹ And it certainly was not difficult to understand the allusion to the pondering Lord-Treasurer.— "*Opus est aliquo Dædalo*, to direct us out of the maze,"² said that much puzzled statesman; but he hardly seemed to be making himself wings with which to lift England and himself out of the labyrinth. The ships were good ships, but there was intolerable delay in getting a sufficient number of them as ready for action as was the spirit of their commanders.

"Our ships do show like gallants here," said Winter; "it would do a man's heart good to behold them. Would to God the Prince of Parma were on the seas with all his forces, and we in sight of them. You should hear that we would make his enterprise very unpleasant to him."³

And Howard, too, was delighted not only with his own little flag-ship the *Ark-Royal*—"the odd ship of the world for all conditions,"—but with all of his fleet that could be mustered. Although wonders were reported, by every arrival from the south, of the coming Armada, the Lord-Admiral was not appalled. He was perhaps rather imprudent in the defiance he flung to the enemy. "Let me have the four great ships and twenty hoys, with but twenty men a-piece, and each with but two iron pieces, and her Majesty shall have a good account of the Spanish forces; and I will make the King wish his galleys home again. Few as we are, if his forces be not hundreds, we will make good sport with them."⁴

But those four great ships of her Majesty, so much longed for by Howard, were not forthcoming. He complained that the Queen was "keeping them to protect Chatham Church withal, when they should be serving their turn abroad."⁵ The Spanish fleet was already reported as numbering from 210 sail, with 36,000 men,⁶ to 400 or 500 ships, and 80,000

¹ Howard to Walsingham, MS. last cited.

² Burghley to Willoughby, $\frac{6}{16}$ Feb. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Sir Will. Winter to Hawkins, $\frac{28}{9}$ Feb., 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Howard to Burghley, $\frac{29}{10}$ Feb., 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁵ Howard to Walsingham, $\frac{11}{21}$ March, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁶ Ibid.

soldiers and mariners ;¹ and yet Drake was not ready with his squadron. "The fault is not in him," said Howard, "but I pray God her Majesty do not repent her slack dealing. We must all lie together, for we shall be stirred very shortly with heave ho ! I fear ere long her Majesty will be sorry she hath believed some so much as she hath done."²

Howard had got to sea, and was cruising all the stormy month of March in the Channel with his little unprepared squadron, expecting at any moment—such was the profound darkness which enveloped the world at that day—that the sails of the Armada might appear in the offing. He made a visit to the Dutch coast, and was delighted with the enthusiasm with which he was received. Five thousand people a day came on board his ships, full of congratulation and delight ; and he informed the Queen that she was not more assured of the Isle of Sheppey than of Walcheren.³

Nevertheless time wore on, and both the army and navy of England were quite unprepared, and the Queen was more reluctant than ever to incur the expense necessary to the defence of her kingdom. At least one of those galleys, which, as Howard bitterly complained, seemed destined to defend Chatham Church, was importunately demanded ; but it was already Easter-Day (17th April), and she was demanded in vain. "Lord ! when should she serve," said the Admiral, "if not at such a time as this ? Either she is fit now to serve, or fit for the fire. I hope never in my time to see so great a cause for her to be used. I dare say her Majesty will look that men should fight for her, and I know they will at this time. The King of Spain doth not keep any ship at home, either of his own or any other, that he can get for money. Well, well, I must pray heartily for peace," said Howard with increasing spleen, "for I see the support of an honourable war will never appear. Sparing and war have no affinity together."⁴

¹ Drake to the Queen, $\frac{29 \text{ April}}{8 \text{ May}}$, 1588.
(S. P. Office MS.)

² Howard to Walsingham, $\frac{11}{21}$ March, 1588. MS.

³ Howard to Walsingham, $\frac{9}{19}$ March, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Same to same, $\frac{7}{17}$ April, 1588
S. P. Office (MS.)

In truth Elizabeth's most faithful subjects were appalled at the ruin which she seemed by her mistaken policy to be rendering inevitable. "I am sorry," said the Admiral, "that her Majesty is so careless of this most dangerous time. I fear me much, and with grief I think it, that she relieth on a hope that will deceive her, and greatly endanger her, and then it will not be her money nor her jewels that will help ; for as they will do good in time, so they will help nothing for the redeeming of time."¹

The preparations on shore were even more dilatory than those on the sea. We have seen that the Duke of Parma, once landed, expected to march directly upon London ; and it was notorious that there were no fortresses to oppose a march of the first general in Europe and his veterans upon that unprotected and wealthy metropolis. An army had been enrolled—a force of 86,016 foot, and 13,831 cavalry ; but it was an army on paper merely. Even of the 86,000, only 48,000 were set down as trained ; and it is certain that the training had been of the most meagre and unsatisfactory description.² Leicester was to be commander-in-chief ; but we have already seen that nobleman measuring himself, not much to his advantage, with Alexander Farnese, in the Isle of Bommel, on the sands of Blankenburg, and at the gates of Sluys. His army was to consist of 27,000 infantry, and 2000 horse ; yet at midsummer it had not reached half that number. Lord Chamberlain Hunsdon was to protect the Queen's person with another army of 36,000 ; but this force was purely an imaginary one ; and the lord-lieutenant of each county was to do his best with the militia. But men were perpetually escaping out of the general service, in order to make themselves retainers for private noblemen, and be kept at their expense. "You shall hardly believe," said Leicester, "how many new liveries be gotten within these six weeks, and no man fears the penalty. It would be better that every

Howard to Walsingham, MS. last cited.

¹ Murden, 608-613. 'Hardwicke Papers,' I. 576. Lingard, viii. 273. Camden, iii. 405. Stowe, 750.

nobleman did as Lord Dacres, than to take away from the principal service such as are set down to serve."¹

Of enthusiasm and courage, then, there was enough, while of drill and discipline, of powder and shot, there was a deficiency. No braver or more competent soldier could be found than Sir Edward Stanley—the man whom we have seen in his yellow jerkin, helping himself into Fort Zutphen with the Spanish soldier's pike—and yet Sir Edward Stanley gave but a sorry account of the choicest soldiers of Chester and Lancashire, whom he had been sent to inspect. "I find them not," he said, "according to your expectation, nor mine own liking. They were appointed two years past to have been trained six days by the year or more, at the discretion of the muster-master, but, as yet, they *have not been trained one day*, so that they have benefited nothing, nor yet know their leaders. There is now promise of amendment, which, I doubt, will be very slow, in respect to my Lord Derby's absence."²

My Lord Derby was at that moment, and for many months afterwards, assisting Valentine Dale in his classical prolixions on the sands of Bourbourg. He had better have been mustering the train-bands of Lancashire. There was a general indisposition in the rural districts to expend money and time in military business, until the necessity should become imperative. Professional soldiers complained bitterly of the canker of a long peace. "For our long quietness, which it hath pleased God to send us," said Stanley, "they think their money very ill bestowed which they expend on armour or weapon, for that they be in hope they shall never have occasion to use it, so they may pass muster, as they have done heretofore. I want greatly powder, for there is little or none at all."³

¹ Leicester to Walsingham, 24 July 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Edward Stanley to the Privy Council, 28 Feb. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Ibid.

All the spring, Sir John Norris

was doing what he could to exercise the soldiers in London. The captains of the Artillery-Garden had been tolerably well drilled for several years, but the rank and file were ignorant enough of the art of war. "There has been a general muster of men fit to bear arms here," said a resident of London in April, "and

The day was fast approaching when all the power in England would be too little for the demand. But matters had not very much mended even at midsummer. It is true that

⁵
¹⁵ July,
1588. Leicester, who was apt to be sanguine—particularly in matters under his immediate control—spoke of the handful of recruits assembled at his camp in

Essex, as "soldiers of a year's experience, rather than a month's camping ;" but in this opinion he differed from many competent authorities, and was somewhat in contradiction to himself. Nevertheless he was glad that the Queen had determined to visit him, and encourage his soldiers.

"I have received in secret," he said, "those news that please me, that your Majesty doth intend to behold the poor and bare company that lie here in the field, most willingly to serve you, yea, most ready to die for you. You shall, dear Lady, behold as goodly, loyal, and as able men as any prince Christian can show you, and yet but a handful of your own, in comparison of the rest you have. What comfort not only these shall receive who shall be the happiest to behold yourself I cannot express ; but assuredly it will give no small comfort to the rest, that shall be overshadowed with the beams of so gracious and princely a party, for what your royal Majesty shall do to these will be accepted as done to all. Good sweet Queen, alter not your purpose, if God give you health. It will be your pain for the time, but your pleasure to behold such people. And surely the place must content you, being as fair a soil and as goodly a prospect as may be seen or found, as this extreme weather hath made trial, which

there have not been found ten thousand sufficient men. This will seem strange to you, but it is as true as the Gospel of St. John. There is a great want of powder, and no hope of supply, except that which can be manufactured in England." *Avis de Londres, Avril, 1588. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)*

The encouragement given to the peace-party in the metropolis by the Ostend negotiations was acting like a poison. "The people here are anxious for peace," wrote a secret correspondent of the Spanish govern-

ment; "and if the Duke of Parma gives the least hope in the world of it, they will all throw down their arms." Much encouragement, too, was given to Philip by the alleged disloyalty of many inhabitants of London. "There is an infinity of fellows here," said the writer, "who desire the sacking of London not less than the Spaniards themselves do, and are doing all they can to advance the Catholic cause." *Avisos de Londres, 21-25-28 Mayo, 1588. (Arch. de Simancas. [Paris.] MS.)*

doth us little annoyance, it is so firm and dry a ground. Your usher also liketh your lodging—a proper, secret, cleanly house. Your camp is a little mile off, and your person will be as sure as at St. James's, for my life."¹

But notwithstanding this cheerful view of the position expressed by the commander-in-chief, the month of July had passed, and the *early days of August* had already arrived; and yet the camp was not formed, nor anything more than that mere handful of troops mustered about Tilbury, to defend the road from Dover to London. The army at Tilbury never exceeded sixteen or seventeen thousand men.²

The whole royal navy—numbering about thirty-four vessels in all—of different sizes, ranging from 1100 and 1000 tons to 30, had at last been got ready for sea. Its aggregate tonnage was 11,820;³ not half so much as at the present moment—in the case of one marvellous merchant-steamer—*floats upon a single keel*.

These vessels carried 837 guns and 6279 men. But the navy was reinforced by the patriotism and liberality of English merchants and private gentlemen. The city of London having been requested to furnish 15 ships of war and 5000 men, asked two days for deliberation, and then gave 30 ships and 10,000 men⁴ of which number 2710 were seamen. Other cities, particularly Plymouth, came forward with proportionate liberality, and private individuals, nobles, merchants, and men of humblest rank, were enthusiastic in volunteering into the naval service, to risk property and life in defence of the country. By midsummer there had been a total force of 197 vessels manned, and partially equipped, with an aggregate of 29,744 tons, and 15,785 seamen. Of this fleet a very large number were mere coasters of less than 100 tons each; scarcely ten ships were above 500, and but one above 1000 tons—the *Triumph*, Captain Frobisher, of 1100 tons, 42 guns, and 500 sailors.⁵

Lord Howard of Effingham, Lord High-Admiral of Eng-

¹ Leicester to the Queen, $\frac{5}{15}$ July, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Stowe, 750.

³ Barrow, 266, 267.

⁴ Stowe, 743. Compare estimates in Barrow, 268.

⁵ Ibid.

land, distinguished for his martial character, public spirit, and admirable temper, rather than for experience or skill as a seaman, took command of the whole fleet, in his "little odd ship for all conditions," the *Ark-Royal*, of 800 tons, 425 sailors, and 55 guns.

Next in rank was Vice-Admiral Drake, in the *Revenge*, of 500 tons, 250 men and 40 guns. Lord Henry Seymour, in the *Rainbow*, of precisely the same size and strength, commanded the inner squadron, which cruised in the neighbourhood of the French and Flemish coast.

The Hollanders and Zeelanders had undertaken to blockade the Duke of Parma still more closely, and pledged themselves that he should never venture to show himself upon the open sea at all. The mouth of the Scheldt, and the dangerous shallows off the coast of Newport and Dunkirk, swarmed with their determined and well-seasoned craft, from the flybooter or filibuster of the rivers, to the larger armed vessels, built to confront every danger, and to deal with any adversary.

Farnese, on his part, within that well-guarded territory, had, for months long, scarcely slackened in his preparations, day or night. Whole forests had been felled in the land of Waas to furnish him with transports and gun-boats, and with such rapidity, that—according to his enthusiastic historiographer—each tree seemed by magic to metamorphose itself into a vessel at the word of command.¹ Shipbuilders, pilots, and seamen, were brought from the Baltic, from Hamburg, from Genoa. The whole surface of the obedient Netherlands, whence wholesome industry had long been banished, was now the scene of a prodigious baleful activity. Portable bridges for fording the rivers of England, stockades for entrenchments, rafts and oars, were provided in vast numbers, and Alexander dug canals and widened natural streams to facilitate his operations.² These wretched Provinces, crippled, impoverished, languishing for peace, were forced to contribute out of their poverty, and to find strength even in their ex-

¹ Strada, II. ix. 542.

² Strada, *ubi sup.* Parma to Philip, | 21 Dec. 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.) Meteren, xv. 270.

haustion, to furnish the machinery for destroying their own countrymen, and for hurling to perdition their most healthful neighbour.

And this approaching destruction of England—now generally believed in—was like the sound of a trumpet throughout Catholic Europe. Scions of royal houses, grandees of azure blood, the bastard of Philip II., the bastard of Savoy, the bastard of Medici, the Margrave of Burghaut, the Archduke Charles, nephew of the Emperor, the Princes of Ascoli and of Melfi, the Prince of Morocco, and others of illustrious name, with many a noble English traitor, like Paget, and Westmoreland, and Stanley, all hurried to the camp of Farnese, as to some famous tournament, in which it was a disgrace to chivalry if their names were not enrolled. The roads were trampled with levies of fresh troops from Spain, Naples, Corsica, the States of the Church, the Milanese, Germany, Burgundy.

Blas Capizucca was sent in person to conduct reinforcements from the north of Italy. The famous Terzio of Naples, under Carlos Pinelo, arrived 3500 strong—the most splendid regiment ever known in the history of war. Every man had an engraved corslet and musket-barrel, and there were many who wore gilded armour, while their waving plumes and festive caparisons made them look like holiday-makers, rather than real campaigners, in the eyes of the inhabitants of the various cities through which their road led them to Flanders.¹ By the end of April the Duke of Parma saw himself at the head of 60,000 men, at a monthly expense of 454,315 crowns or dollars.² Yet so rapid was the progress of disease—incident to northern climates—among those southern soldiers, that we shall find the number woefully diminished before they were likely to set foot upon the English shore.

Thus great preparations, simultaneously with pompous

¹ Carnero, 'Guerras de Flandes' (1625), p. 222.

² 'Relacion Particular,' &c. 29th

April, 1588. (Arch. de Simancas MS.) Compare Strada, II. ix. 540.

negotiations, had been going forward month after month, in England, Holland, Flanders. Nevertheless, winter, spring, two-thirds of summer, had passed away, and on the 29th July, 1588, there remained the same sickening uncertainty, which was the atmosphere in which the nations had existed for a twelvemonth.

Howard had cruised for a few weeks between England and Spain, without any results, and, on his return, had found it necessary to implore her Majesty, as late as July, to "trust no more to Judas' kisses, but to her sword, not her enemy's word."¹

¹ Howard to Walsingham, $\frac{23 \text{ June}}{8 \text{ July}}$, 1588, in Barrow, 284.

CHAPTER XIX.

Philip Second in his Cabinet — His System of Work and Deception — His vast but vague Schemes of Conquest — The Armada sails — Description of the Fleet — The Junction with Parma unprovided for — The Gale off Finisterre — Exploits of David Gwynn — First Engagements in the English Channel — Considerable Losses of the Spaniards — General Engagement near Portland — Superior Seamanship of the English — Both Fleets off Calais — A Night of Anxiety — Project of Howard and Winter — Impatience of the Spaniards — Fire-Ships sent against the Armada — A great Galeasse disabled — Attacked and captured by English Boats — General Engagement of both Fleets — Loss of several Spanish Ships — Armada flies, followed by the English — English insufficiently provided — Are obliged to relinquish the Chase — A great Storm disperses the Armada — Great Energy of Parma — Made fruitless by Philip's Dulness — England readier at Sea than on Shore — The Lieutenant-General's Complaints — His Quarrels with Norris and Williams — Harsh Statements as to the English Troops — Want of Organization in England — Royal Parsimony and Delay — Quarrels of English Admirals — England's narrow Escape from great Peril — Various Rumours as to the Armada's Fate — Philip for a long Time in Doubt — He believes himself victorious — Is tranquil when undeceived.

It is now time to look in upon the elderly letter-writer in the Escorial, and see how he was playing his part in the drama.

His counsellors were very few. His chief advisers were rather like private secretaries than cabinet ministers; for Philip had been withdrawing more and more into seclusion and mystery as the webwork of his schemes multiplied and widened. He liked to do his work, assisted by a very few confidential servants. The Prince of Eboli, the famous Ruy Gomez, was dead. So was Cardinal Granvelle. So were Erasso and Delgado. His midnight council—*junta de noche*—for thus, from its original hour of assembling, and the air of secrecy in which it was enwrapped, it was habitually called—was a triumvirate. Don Juan de Idiaquez was chief secretary of state and of war; the Count de Chinchon was minister for the household, for Italian affairs, and for the kingdom of Aragon; Don Cristoval de Moura, the monarch's chief favourite, was at the head of the finance department, and administered the affairs of Portugal and Castile.¹

¹ Herrera, III. ii. 43-45. and 138.

The president of the council of Italy, after Granvelle's death, was Quiroga, cardinal of Toledo, and inquisitor-general.¹ Enormously long letters, in the King's name, were prepared chiefly by the two secretaries, Idiaquez and Moura. In their hands was the vast correspondence with Mendoza and Parma, and Olivarez at Rome, and with Mucio, in which all the stratagems for the subjugation of Protestant Europe were slowly and artistically contrived. Of the great conspiracy against human liberty, of which the Pope and Philip were the double head, this midnight triumvirate was the chief executive committee.

These innumerable despatches, signed by Philip, were not the emanations of his own mind. The King had a fixed purpose to subdue Protestantism and to conquer the world; but the plans for carrying the purpose into effect were developed by subtler and more comprehensive minds than his own. It was enough for him to ponder wearily over schemes which he was supposed to dictate, and to give himself the appearance of supervising what he scarcely comprehended. And his work of supervision was often confined to pettiest details. The handwriting of Spain and Italy at that day was beautiful, and in our modern eyes seems neither antiquated nor ungraceful. But Philip's scrawl was like that of a clown just admitted to a writing-school, and the whole margin of a fairly penned despatch, perhaps fifty pages long, laid before him for comment and signature by Idiaquez or Moura, would be sometimes covered with a few awkward sentences, which it was almost impossible to read, and which, when deciphered, were apt to reveal suggestions of astounding triviality.²

Thus a most important despatch—in which the King, with his own hand, was supposed to be conveying secret intelligence to Mendoza concerning the Armada, together with minute directions for the regulation of Guise's conduct at the me-

¹ Ibid.

² No man who has had personal experience in the Archives of Simancas, or who has studied with his own eyes the great collection of documents originally belonging to that depository, and now preserved in the Archives of the Empire at Paris,

will assert that the description in the text is exaggerated. The paragraphs written in the King's own hand are almost illegible, and evidently written with great difficulty. When deciphered, they are found to be always awkward, generally ungrammatical, and very often puerile.

morable epoch of the barricades—contained but a single comment from the monarch's own pen. "The Armada has been in Lisbon about a month—*quassi un mes*"—wrote the secretary. "There is but one *s* in *quasi*," said Philip.¹

Again, a despatch of Mendoza to the King contained the intelligence that Queen Elizabeth was, at the date of the letter, residing at St. James's. Philip, who had no objection to display his knowledge of English affairs—as became the man who had already been almost sovereign of England, and meant to be entirely so—supplied a piece of information in an apostille to this despatch. "St. James is a house of recreation," he said, "which was once a monastery. There is a park between it, and the palace which is called Huytal; but *why it is called Huytal*, I am sure I don't know."² His researches in the English language had not enabled him to recognize the adjective and substantive out of which the abstruse compound White-Hall (*Huyt-al*), was formed.

On another occasion, a letter from England containing important intelligence concerning the number of soldiers enrolled in that country to resist the Spanish invasion, the quantity of gunpowder and various munitions collected, with other details of like nature, furnished besides a bit of information of less vital interest. "In the windows of the Queen's presence-chamber they have discovered a *great quantity of lice*, all clustered together," said the writer.

Such a minute piece of statistics could not escape the microscopic eye of Philip. So, disregarding the soldiers and the gunpowder, he commented *only* on this last-mentioned clause of the letter; and he did it cautiously too, as a King surnamed the Prudent should:—

¹ Philip II. to Mendoza, 2 June, 1588. A 56. 152. (Arch. de Simancas. [Paris.] MS.) "Ha un S in quasi."

² "La reyna se avia retirado a San Gemes, que es a las espaldas de Huytal, la casa de Londres, y para guarda de su persona decian haver señalada 4 mil hombres, y mil cavalleros que estuviessen siempre con ella, y a causa da estar tan medrosos los de Londres, llevaron a Don Pedro de Valdez

y a todos los de mas que se tomaron en carros a Londres para que viese el pueblo que avian tomado presos españoles con vos de ser deshecha toda la armada de V. M^d," &c.

Note in Philip's hand: "Casa de plazer que fue monasterio—es un parque entre ella y el palacio que se llama Huytal, y no sé porque ya." Mendoza to Philip II. 20 Aug. 1588. (Arch. de Simancas. [Paris.] MS.)

"But perhaps they were fleas," wrote Philip.¹

Such examples—and many more might be given—sufficiently indicate the nature of the man on whom such enormous responsibilities rested, and who had been, by the adulation of his fellow-creatures, elevated into a god. And we may cast a glance upon him as he sits in his cabinet—buried among those piles of despatches—and receiving methodically, at stated hours, Idiaquez, or Moura, or Chincon, to settle the affairs of so many millions of the human race; and we may watch exactly the progress of that scheme, concerning which so many contradictory rumours were circulating in Europe. In the month of April a Walsingham could doubt, even in August an ingenuous comptroller could disbelieve, the reality of the great project, and the Pope himself, even while pledging himself to assistance, had been systematically deceived. He had supposed the whole scheme rendered futile by the exploit of Drake at Cadiz, and had declared that "the Queen of England's distaff was worth more than Philip's sword, that the King was a poor creature, that he would never be able to come to a resolution, and that even if he should do so, it would be too late;"² and he had subsequently been doing his best, through his nuncio in France, to persuade the Queen to embrace the Catholic religion, and thus save herself from the impending danger. Henry III. had even been urged by the Pope to send a special ambassador to her for this purpose—as if the persuasions of the wretched Valois were likely to be effective with Elizabeth Tudor—and Burghley had, by means of spies in Rome, who pretended to be Catholics, given

¹ "En les fenestres de la chambre de presence en la cour de la Reyne on a trouvé fort grand nombre de poulx qui se sont coulées ensemble." There is a Spanish translation appended to this document, and on the margin, in Philip's hand, is written: "Gran numero de piojos o quiza pulgos." Avisos de Londres, 1 April, 1586. (Arch. de Simancas [Paris], MS.)

² Un Vandini, gran vanquero de Roma, que tiene correspondencia con este Rey X^{mo} y inteligencia con

muchos Cateos le ha escrito haver dicho el Papa quando supo lo que Draquez avia hecho en Cales, que Su Mag^d (Philip II.) era persona de poco, que nunca se acaveva de resolver, y quando lo hiziesse no seria en tiempo—han aqui no solo solemnizado pero publicado añadiendo que valia mas la rueca de la Reyna de Inglaterra que la espada del Rey de España," &c. &c. Mendoza to Idiaquez, 16 July, 1587. (Arch. de Simancas [Paris], MS.)

out intimations that the Queen was seriously contemplating such a step.¹ Thus the Pope, notwithstanding Cardinal Allan, the famous million, and the bull, was thought by Mendoza to be growing lukewarm in the Spanish cause, and to be urging upon the "Englishwoman" the propriety of converting herself, even at the late hour of May, 1588.²

But Philip, for years, had been maturing his scheme, while reposing entire confidence—beyond his own cabinet doors—upon none but Alexander Farnese; and the Duke—alone of all men—was perfectly certain that the invasion would, this year, be attempted.

The captain-general of the expedition was the Marquis of Santa Cruz, a man of considerable naval experience, and of constant good fortune, who, in thirty years, had never sustained a defeat.³ He had however shown no desire to risk one, when Drake had offered him the memorable challenge in the year 1587, and perhaps his reputation of the invincible captain had been obtained by the same adroitness on previous occasions. He was no friend to Alexander Farnese, and was much disgusted when informed of the share allotted to the Duke in the great undertaking.⁴ A course of reproach and perpetual reprimand was the treatment to which he was, in consequence, subjected, which was not more conducive to the advancement of the expedition than it was to the health of the captain-general. Early in January the Cardinal Archduke was sent to Lisbon to lecture him, with instructions to turn a deaf ear to all his remonstrances, to deal with him

¹ "Me he visto con el nuncio, y me ha dicho que Su Santid^d, avia meses, que pidio a este Rey embiasse a la de Inglaterra lo bien que le estaria hazerse Catolica, y esto por tener Su S^a avisos poder venir en ello con semejantes persuasiones que este Rey escrivio a su embax^o que tiene en Inglaterra le avisasse si estava en esta disposicion la Reyna, el qual respondio el Tesorero Cecil por medio ne espiones que tenia en Roma fingiendo ser Catolicos avia hecho llegar esta voz a Su S^a para ganar tiempo y entibiar

le en persuadir la empresa a V. Mag^d. y que agora de nuevo Su S^a avia significado al Card^l de Joyos que seria muy bien que este Rey embiasse un embax^o extra^o para haver este officio con la Ynglesa." &c. &c. Mendoza to Philip II. 8 May, 1588. (Arch. de Simancas [Paris], MS.)

² Ibid.

³ Herrera, III. iii. 70.

⁴ Las Advertencias de Su Mag^d para el Marques de Santa Cruz, 1582. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

peremptorily, to forbid his writing letters on the subject to his Majesty, and to order him to accept his post or to decline it without conditions, in which latter contingency he was to be informed that his successor was already decided upon.¹

This was not the most eligible way perhaps for bringing the captain-general into a cheerful mood ; particularly as he was expected to be ready in *January* to sail to the Flemish coast.² Nevertheless the Marquis expressed a hope to accomplish his sovereign's wishes ; and great had been the bustle in all the dockyards of Naples, Sicily, and Spain ; particularly in the provinces of Guipuzcoa, Biscay, and Andalusia, and in the four great cities of the coast. War-ships of all dimensions, tenders, transports, soldiers, sailors, sutlers, munitions of war, provisions, were all rapidly concentrating in Lisbon as the great place of rendezvous ; and Philip confidently believed, and as confidently informed the Duke of Parma, that he might be expecting the Armada at any time after the end of January.³

Perhaps in the history of mankind there has never been a vast project of conquest conceived and matured in so protracted and yet so desultory a manner, as was this famous Spanish invasion. There was something almost puerile in the whims rather than schemes of Philip for carrying out his purpose. It was probable that some resistance would be offered, at least by the navy of England, to the subjugation of that country, and the King had enjoyed an opportunity, the preceding summer, of seeing the way in which English sailors did their work. He had also appeared to understand the necessity of covering the passage of Farnese from the Flemish ports into the Thames, by means of the great Spanish fleet from Lisbon. Nevertheless he never seemed to be aware that Farnese could not invade England quite by himself, and was perpetually expecting to hear that he had done so.

"Holland and Zeeland," wrote Alexander to Philip, "have

¹ MS. last cited.

² Orden de Su Mag^d que se embio al Sr Card^l Archiduque. Enero, 1588. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

³ Herrera, III. iii. 90, 91.

been arming with their accustomed promptness ; England has made great preparations. I have done my best to make the impossible possible ; but your letter told me to wait for Santa Cruz, and to expect him very shortly. If, on the contrary, you had told me to make the passage without him, I would have made the attempt, although we had every one of us perished. Four ships of war could sink every one of my boats. Nevertheless I beg to be informed of your Majesty's final order. If I am seriously expected to make the passage without Santa Cruz, I am ready to do it, although I should go all alone in a cock-boat."¹

But Santa Cruz at least was not destined to assist in the conquest of England ; for, worn out with fatigue and vexation, goaded by the reproaches and insults of Philip, Santa Cruz was dead.² He was replaced in the chief command of the fleet by the Duke of Medina Sidonia, a grandee of vast wealth, but with little capacity and less experience. To the iron marquis it was said that a golden duke³ had succeeded ; but the duke of gold did not find it easier to accomplish impossibilities than his predecessor had done. Day after day, throughout the months of winter and spring, the King had been writing that the fleet was just on the point of sailing, and as frequently he had been renewing to Alexander Farnese the intimation that perhaps, after all, he might find an opportunity of crossing to England, without waiting for its arrival.⁴ And Alexander, with the same regularity, had been informing his master that the troops in the Netherlands had been daily dwindling from sickness and other causes, till at last, instead of the 30,000 effective infantry, with which it had been originally intended to make the enterprise, he had not more than 17,000 in the month of April.⁵ The 6000 Spaniards, whom he was to receive from the fleet of Medina Sidonia, would therefore be the very mainspring of his army.⁶ After

¹ "Aunque huviesse de passar solo en una zabra." Parma to Philip, 21st Dec. 1587. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

² Strada, II. ix. 549. Philip to Parma, 18 Feb. 1588. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

³ Strada, *ubi sup.*

⁴ Philip to Parma, 6 March, 1588. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

⁵ Parma to Philip, 20 March, 1588. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

⁶ "El niervo principal." (*Ibid.*)

leaving no more soldiers in the Netherlands than were absolutely necessary for the defence of the obedient Provinces against the rebels, he could only take with him to England 23,000 men, even after the reinforcements from Medina. "When we talked of taking England by surprise," said Alexander, "we never thought of less than 30,000. Now that she is alert and ready for us, and that it is certain we must fight by sea and by land, 50,000 would be few."¹ He almost ridiculed the King's suggestion that a feint might be made by way of besieging some few places in Holland or Zeeland. The whole matter in hand, he said, had become as public as possible, and the only efficient blind was the peace-negotiation; for many believed, as the English deputies were now treating at Ostend, that peace would follow.²

At last, on the 28th, 29th, and 30th May, 1588, the fleet, which had been waiting at Lisbon more than a month for favourable weather, set sail from that port, after having been duly blessed by the Cardinal Archduke Albert, viceroy of Portugal.³

There were rather more than one hundred and thirty ships in all, divided into ten squadrons.⁴ There was the squadron of Portugal, consisting of ten galleons, and commanded by the captain-general, Medina Sidonia. In the squadron of Castile were fourteen ships of various sizes, under General Diego Flores de Valdez. This officer was one of the most experienced naval officers in the Spanish service, and was subsequently ordered, in consequence, to sail with the generalissimo in his flag-ship.⁵ In the squadron of Andalusia were ten galleons and other vessels, under General Pedro de Valdez. In the squadron of Biscay were ten galleons and lesser ships, under General Juan Martinez de Recalde, upper admiral of

¹ Parma to Philip, 31 Jan. 1588. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

² Same to same, 20 March, 1588. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

³ Philip II. to Mendoza, 24 April, 1588, and 2 June, 1588. (Arch. de Simancas [Paris], MSS.) Bor, III. 321, 322.

⁴ Herrera, III. iii. 93, *seq.* Philip II. to Parma, 13 May, 1588, says 150, but there were many small vessels and transports equipped, which never left Spain. The number of effective ships of all kinds was probably less than 140.

⁵ Herrera, *ubi sup.*

the fleet. In the squadron of Guipuzcoa were ten galleons, under General Miguel de Oquendo. In the squadron of Italy were ten ships, under General Martin de Bertendona. In the squadron of Urcas, or store-ships, were twenty-three sail, under General Juan Gomez de Medina. The squadron of tenders, caravels, and other vessels, numbered twenty-two sail, under General Antonio Hurtado de Mendoza. The squadron of four galleasses was commanded by Don Hugo de Moncada. The squadron of four galeras, or galleys, was in charge of Captain Diego de Medrado.

Next in command to Medina Sidonia was Don Alonzo de Leyva, captain-general of the light horse of Milan. Don Francisco de Bobadilla was marshal-general of the camp. Don Diego de Pimentel was marshal of the camp to the famous Terzio or legion of Sicily.¹

The total tonnage of the fleet was 59,120: the number of guns was 3165. Of Spanish troops there were 19,295 on board: there were 8252 sailors and 2088 galley-slaves. Besides these, there was a force of noble volunteers, belonging to the most illustrious houses of Spain, with their attendants, amounting to nearly 2000 in all. There was also Don Martin Alacon, administrator and vicar-general of the Holy Inquisition, at the head of some 290 monks of the mendicant orders, priests and familiars.² The grand total of those embarked was about 30,000. The daily expense of the fleet was estimated by Don Diego de Pimentel at 12,000 ducats a-day, and the daily cost of the combined naval and military force under Farnese and Medina Sidonia was stated at 30,000 ducats.³

The size of the ships ranged from 1200 tons to 300. The galleons, of which there were about sixty, were huge round-stemmed clumsy vessels, with bulwarks three or four feet thick, and built up at stem and stern, like castles. The galleasses—of which there were four—were a third larger than the ordinary

¹ Herrera, *ubi sup.* Compare Strada, II. ix. 546, *seq.* Bor. III. xxv. 317, *seq.* Meteren, xv. 270. Camden, III. 410, *seq.* Carnero, 226. Coloma, f. 5, *seq.* Barrow, 266-270.

² Meteren, *ubi sup.*

³ Examination of Don Diego de Pimentel before the council of Holland; apud Bor. III. 325, *seq.*

galley, and were rowed each by three hundred galley-slaves. They consisted of an enormous towering fortress at the stern, a castellated structure almost equally massive in front, with seats for the rowers amidships. At stem and stern and between each of the slaves' benches were heavy cannon. These galeasses were floating edifices, very wonderful to contemplate. They were gorgeously decorated. There were splendid state-apartments, cabins, chapels, and pulpits in each, and they were amply provided with awnings, cushions, streamers, standards, gilded saints, and bands of music.¹ To take part in an ostentatious pageant, nothing could be better devised. To fulfil the great objects of a war-vessel—to sail and to fight—they were the worst machines ever launched upon the ocean. The four galleys were similar to the galeasses in every respect except that of size, in which they were by one-third inferior.

All the ships of the fleet—galeasses, galleys, galleons, and hulks—were so encumbered with top-hamper, so overweighted in proportion to their draught of water, that they could bear but little canvas, even with smooth seas and light and favourable winds. In violent tempests, therefore, they seemed likely to suffer. To the eyes of the 16th century these vessels seemed enormous. A ship of 1300 tons was then a monster rarely seen, and a fleet, numbering from 130 to 150 sail, with an aggregate tonnage of 60,000, seemed sufficient to conquer the world, and to justify the arrogant title, by which it had baptized itself, of the Invincible.

Such was the machinery which Philip had at last set afloat, for the purpose of dethroning Elizabeth and establishing the inquisition in England. One hundred and forty ships, eleven thousand Spanish veterans, as many more recruits, partly Spanish, partly Portuguese, 2000 grandees, as many galley-slaves, and three hundred barefooted friars and inquisitors.

The plan was simple. Medina Sidonia was to proceed straight from Lisbon to Calais roads: there he was to wait for the Duke of Parma, who was to come forth from Newport,

¹ Strada, II. ix. 546. Meteren, xv. 270.

Sluys, and Dunkerk, bringing with him his 17,000 veterans, and to assume the chief command of the whole expedition. They were then to cross the channel to Dover, land the army of Parma, reinforced with 6000 Spaniards from the fleet, and with these 23,000 men Alexander was to march at once upon London. Medina Sidonia was to seize and fortify the Isle of Wight, guard the entrance of the harbours against any interference from the Dutch and English fleets, and—so soon as the conquest of England had been effected—he was to proceed to Ireland.¹ It had been the wish of Sir William Stanley that Ireland should be subjugated first, as a basis of operations against England; but this had been overruled. The intrigues of Mendoza and Farnese, too, with the Catholic nobles of Scotland, had proved, after all, unsuccessful. King James had yielded to superior offers of money and advancement held out to him by Elizabeth, and was now, in Alexander's words, a confirmed heretic.²

There was no course left, therefore, but to conquer England at once. A strange omission had however been made in the plan from first to last. The commander of the whole expedition was the Duke of Parma: on his head was the whole responsibility. Not a gun was to be fired—if it could be avoided—until he had come forth with his veterans to make his junction with the Invincible Armada off Calais. Yet there was no arrangement whatever to enable him to come forth—not the slightest provision to effect that junction. It would almost seem that the letter-writer of the Escorial had been quite ignorant of the existence of the Dutch fleets off Dunkerk, Newport, and Flushing, although he had certainly received information enough of this formidable obstacle to his plan.

“Most joyful I shall be,” said Farnese—writing on one of the days when he had seemed most convinced by Valentine Dale's arguments, and driven to despair by his postulates—“to see myself with these soldiers on English ground, where,

¹ Letters of Philip and of Parma | ² Parma to Philip II. 8 June, 1588
already cited. (Arch. de Sim. MS.) | (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

with God's help, I hope to accomplish your Majesty's demands."¹ He was much troubled however to find doubts entertained at the last moment as to his 6000 Spaniards; and certainly it hardly needed an argument to prove that the invasion of England with but 17,000 soldiers was a somewhat hazardous scheme. Yet the pilot Moresini had brought him letters from Medina Sidonia, in which the Duke expressed hesitation about parting with these 6000 veterans, unless the English fleet should have been previously destroyed, and had also again expressed his hope that Parma would be punctual to the rendezvous.² Alexander immediately combated these views in letters to Medina and to the King. He avowed that he would not depart one tittle from the plan originally laid down. The 6000 men, and more if possible, were to be furnished him, and the Spanish Armada was to protect his own flotilla, and to keep the channel clear of enemies. No other scheme was possible, he said, for it was clear that his collection of small flat-bottomed river-boats and hoys could not even make the passage, except in smooth weather. They could not contend with a storm, much less with the enemy's ships, which would destroy them utterly in case of a meeting, without his being able to avail himself of his soldiers—who would be so closely packed as to be hardly moveable—or of any human help. The preposterous notion that he should come out with his flotilla to make a junction with Medina off Calais, was over and over again denounced by Alexander with vehemence and bitterness, and most boding expressions were used by him as to the probable result, were such a delusion persisted in.³

Every possible precaution therefore but one had been taken. The King of France—almost at the same instant in which Guise had been receiving his latest instructions from the Escorial for dethroning and destroying that monarch—had been assured by Philip of his inalienable affection; had been informed of the object of this great naval expedition—which was not by any means, as Mendoza had stated to Henry, an

¹ Parma to Philip, 22 June, 1588, (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

enterprise against France or England, but only a determined attempt to clear the sea, once for all, of these English pirates who had done so much damage for years past on the high seas—and had been requested, in case any Spanish ship should be driven by stress of weather into French ports, to afford them that comfort and protection to which the vessels of so close and friendly an ally were entitled.¹

Thus there was bread, beef, and powder enough—there were monks and priests enough—standards, galley-slaves, and inquisitors enough; but there were no light vessels in the Armada, and no heavy vessels in Parma's fleet. Medina could not go to Farnese, nor could Farnese come to Medina. The junction was likely to be difficult, and yet it had never once entered the heads of Philip or his counsellors to provide for that difficulty. The King never seemed to imagine that Farnese, with 40,000 or 50,000 soldiers in the Netherlands, a fleet of 300 transports, and power to dispose of very large funds for one great purpose, could be kept in prison by a fleet of Dutch skippers and corsairs.

With as much sluggishness as might have been expected from their clumsy architecture, the ships of the Armada consumed nearly three weeks in sailing from Lisbon to the neighbourhood of Cape Finisterre. Here they were overtaken by a tempest, and were scattered hither and thither, almost at the mercy of the winds and waves;² for those unwieldy hulks

¹ "Hableys antes al Rey de mi parte, y conviniendo hablarle, le direys que el atrevimiento de los corsarios ingleses me ha obligado a dessear limpiar dellos la mar, este verano, y que assi he mandado hazer una armada para este efecto, en la qual avra cuydado de hazer todo, el buen tratamiento que es razon a sus buenos subditos que toparen, de que le he querido dar parte y pedir le como tambien lo hareys en mi nombre, y si algunos baxeles de mi armada aportaran con temporal a sus puertos, ordene que sean tratados conforme a la buena paz y hermandad que entre nosotros hay, quitandole por aqui la sospecha destas fuerzas, y grangeandole para lo que se

pretende, y este oficio bastara por agora, sin llegar a mas particularidades." &c. Philip II. to Mendoza, 24 April, 1588. (Arch. de Sim. [Paris.] A. 56, 148, MS.)

This letter reached Mendoza in Paris just before that envoy, according to his master's instructions, was assisting Guise to make his memorable stroke of the 'barricades.'

There is another letter of the same purport nearly three months later. Philip II. to Mendoza, 18 July, 1588. (Arch. de Sim. [Paris.] A. 56, 154, MS.)

² Herrera, Strada, Bor, Meteren, Camden. Carnero, Coloma, Barrow, *ubi sup.*

were ill adapted to a tempest in the Bay of Biscay. There were those in the Armada, however, to whom the storm was a blessing. David Gwynn, a Welsh mariner, had sat in the Spanish hulks a wretched galley-slave—as prisoner of war—for more than eleven years, hoping, year after year, for a chance of escape from bondage.¹ He sat now among the rowers of the great galley, the *Vasana*, one of the humblest instruments by which the subjugation of his native land to Spain and Rome was to be effected.

Very naturally, among the ships which suffered most in the gale were the four huge unwieldy galleys—a squadron of four under Don Diego de Medrado—with their enormous turrets at stem and stern, and their low and open waists. The chapels, pulpits, and gilded Madonnas proved of little avail in a hurricane. The *Diana*, largest of the four, went down with all hands; the *Princess* was labouring severely in the trough of the sea, and the *Vasana* was likewise in imminent danger. So the master of this galley asked the Welsh slave, who had far more experience and seamanship than he possessed himself, if it were possible to save the vessel. Gwynn saw an opportunity for which he had been waiting eleven years. He was ready to improve it. He pointed out to the captain the hopelessness of attempting to overtake the Armada. They should go down, he said, as the *Diana* had already done, and as the *Princess* was like at any moment to do, unless they took in every rag of sail, and did their best with their oars to gain the nearest port. But in order that the rowers might exert themselves to the utmost, it was necessary that the soldiers, who were a useless incumbrance on deck, should go below. Thus only could the ship be properly handled. The captain, anxious to save his ship and his life, consented. Most of the soldiers were sent beneath the hatches: a few were ordered to sit on the benches among the slaves. Now there had been a secret understanding for many days among these unfortunate men, nor were they wholly without weapons. They had been accustomed to make toothpicks and other trifling articles for

¹ Bor, iii. 322, *seq.*

sale out of broken sword-blades and other refuse bits of steel. There was not a man among them who had not thus provided himself with a secret stiletto.¹

At first Gwynn occupied himself with arrangements for weathering the gale. So soon however as the ship had been made comparatively easy, he looked around him, suddenly threw down his cap, and raised his hand to the rigging. It was a preconcerted signal. The next instant he stabbed the captain to the heart, while each one of the galley-slaves killed the soldier nearest him; then, rushing below, they surprised and overpowered the rest of the troops, and put them all to death.²

Coming again upon deck, David Gwynn descried the fourth galley of the squadron, called the *Royal*, commanded by Commodore Medrado in person, bearing down upon them, before the wind. It was obvious that the *Vasana* was already an object of suspicion.

"Comrades," said Gwynn, "God has given us liberty, and by our courage we must prove ourselves worthy of the boon."³

As he spoke there came a broadside from the galley *Royal* which killed nine of his crew. David, nothing daunted, laid his ship close alongside of the *Royal*, with such a shock that the timbers quivered again. Then at the head of his liberated slaves, now thoroughly armed, he dashed on board the galley, and, after a furious conflict, in which he was assisted by the slaves of the *Royal*, succeeded in mastering the vessel, and putting all the Spanish soldiers to death. This done, the combined rowers, welcoming Gwynn as their deliverer from an abject slavery which seemed their lot for life, willingly accepted his orders. The gale had meantime abated, and the two galleys, well conducted by the experienced and intrepid Welshman, made their way to the coast of France, and landed at Bayonne on the 31st, dividing among them the property found on board the two galleys. Thence, by land, the fugitives, four hundred and sixty-six in number—Frenchmen,

¹ Bor, iii. 322, seq.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

Spaniards, Englishmen, Turks, and Moors, made their way to Rochelle. Gwynn had an interview with Henry of Navarre, and received from that chivalrous king a handsome present. Afterwards he found his way to England, and was well commended by the Queen. The rest of the liberated slaves dispersed in various directions."¹

This was the first adventure of the invincible Armada. Of the squadron of galleys, one was already sunk in the sea, and two of the others had been conquered by their own slaves. The fourth rode out the gale with difficulty, and joined the rest of the fleet, which ultimately re-assembled at Coruña; the ships having, in distress, put in at first at Vivera, Ribadeo, Gijon, and other northern ports of Spain.² At the Groyne—as the English of that day were accustomed to call Coruña—they remained a month, repairing damages and recruiting; and on the 22nd of July³ (N.S.) the Armada set sail. Six days later, the Spaniards took soundings, thirty leagues from the Scilly Islands, and on Friday, the 29th of July, off the Lizard,⁴ they had the first glimpse of the land of promise presented them by Sixtus V., of which they had at last come to take possession.

On the same day and night the blaze and smoke of ten thousand beacon-fires from the Land's End to Margate, and from the Isle of Wight to Cumberland, gave warning to every Englishman that the enemy was at last upon them. Almost at that very instant intelligence had been brought from the court to the Lord-Admiral at Plymouth, that the Armada, dispersed and shattered by the gales of June, was not likely to make its appearance that year; and orders had consequently been given to disarm the four largest ships, and send

¹ Bor, *Meteren*, xv. 272. Compare Camden, iv. 410, who had heard, however, nothing but the name of Gwynn, and who speaks of the "treachery of the Turkish rowers." (l)

² Herrera, III. iii. 94.

³ Medina Sidonia from his galleon San Martin to Parma, 25 July, 1588. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

The dates in the narrative will be always given according to the New Style, then already adopted by Spain, Holland, and France, although not by England. The dates thus given are, of course, ten days later than they appear in contemporary English records.

⁴ Herrera, *ubi sup.*

them into dock.¹ Even Walsingham, as already stated, had participated in this strange delusion.²

Before Howard had time to act upon this ill-timed suggestion—even had he been disposed to do so—he received authentic intelligence that the great fleet was off the Lizard. Neither he nor Francis Drake were the men to lose time in such an emergency, and before that Friday night was spent, sixty of the best English ships had been warped out of Plymouth harbour.³

On Saturday, 30th July, the wind was very light at south-west, with a mist and drizzling rain,⁴ but by three in the afternoon the two fleets could descry and count each other through the haze.⁵

By nine o'clock, 31st July, about two miles from Looe,⁶ on the Cornish coast, the fleets had their first meeting. There were 136 sail of the Spaniards, of which ninety were large ships, and sixty-seven of the English.⁷ It was a solemn moment. The long-expected Armada presented a pompous, almost a theatrical appearance. The ships seemed arranged for a pageant, in honour of a victory already won. Disposed in form of a crescent, the horns of which were seven miles asunder, those gilded, towered, floating castles, with their gaudy standards and their martial music, moved slowly along the channel, with an air of indolent pomp. Their captain-general, the golden Duke, stood in his private shot-proof fortress,⁸ on the deck of his great galleon the *Saint Martin*, surrounded by generals of infantry, and colonels of cavalry, who knew as little as he did himself of naval matters. The English vessels, on the other

¹ Meteren, xv. 272. Camden, III. 410. Murdin, 615-621. The ships were the 'Triumph,' 'White Bear,' 'Elizabeth Jonas,' and 'Victory.' Lingard, viii. 280.

² Walsingham to Sir Ed. Norris, 9 July, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.) See page 42, note 4.

³ Herrera, *ubi sup.* Howard to

Walsingham, ²¹/₂₁ July, 1588, in Barrow, 288.

⁴ Herrera, 101.

⁵ *Ibid.* Howard to Walsingham, *ubi sup.*

⁶ R. Tomson to —, ^{29 July}/_{9 Aug.} 1588 (S. P. Office MS.)

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Meteren, xv. 274.

hand—with a few exceptions, light, swift, and easily handled—could sail round and round those unwieldy galleons, hulks, and galleys rowed by fettered slave-gangs. The superior seamanship of free Englishmen, commanded by such experienced captains as Drake, Frobisher, and Hawkins—from infancy at home on blue water—was manifest in the very first encounter. They obtained the weather-gage at once, and cannonaded the enemy at intervals with considerable effect, easily escaping at will out of range of the sluggish Armada, which was incapable of bearing sail in pursuit, although provided with an armament which could sink all its enemies at close quarters. “We had some small fight with them that Sunday afternoon,” said Hawkins.¹

Medina Sidonia hoisted the royal standard at the fore, and the whole fleet did its utmost, which was little, to offer general battle. It was in vain. The English, following at the heels of the enemy, refused all such invitations, and attacked only the rear-guard of the Armada, where Recalde commanded. That admiral, steadily maintaining his post, faced his nimble antagonists, who continued to tease, to maltreat, and to elude him, while the rest of the fleet proceeded slowly up the Channel closely followed by the enemy. And thus the running fight continued along the coast, in full view of Plymouth, whence boats with reinforcements and volunteers were perpetually arriving to the English ships, until the battle had drifted quite out of reach of the town.

Already in this first “small fight” the Spaniards had learned a lesson, and might even entertain a doubt of their invincibility. But before the sun set there were more serious disasters. Much powder and shot had been expended by the Spaniards to very little purpose, and so a master-gunner on board Admiral Oquendo’s flag-ship was reprimanded for careless ball-practice. The gunner, who was a Fleming, enraged with his captain, laid a train to the powder-magazine, fired it, and threw himself into the sea.² Two decks blew up. The

¹ Hawkins to Walsingham, 31 July
1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

9 Aug.

² Report of certain Mariners, Aug. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

great castle at the stern rose into the clouds, carrying with it the paymaster-general of the fleet, a large portion of treasure, and nearly two hundred men.¹ The ship was a wreck, but it was possible to save the rest of the crew. So Medina Sidonia sent light vessels to remove them, and wore with his flag-ship, to defend Oquendo, who had already been fastened upon by his English pursuers. But the Spaniards, not being so light in hand as their enemies, involved themselves in much embarrassment by this manœuvre; and there was much falling foul of each other, entanglement of rigging, and carrying away of yards. Oquendo's men, however, were ultimately saved, and taken to other ships.²

Meantime Don Pedro de Valdez, commander of the Andalusian squadron, having got his galleon into collision with two or three Spanish ships successively, had at last carried away his fore-mast close to the deck, and the wreck had fallen against his main-mast. He lay crippled and helpless, the Armada was slowly deserting him, night was coming on, the sea was running high, and the English, ever hovering near, were ready to grapple with him. In vain did Don Pedro fire signals of distress. The captain-general, even as though the unlucky galleon had not been connected with the Catholic fleet—calmly fired a gun to collect his scattered ships, and abandoned Valdez to his fate. "He left me comfortless in sight of the whole fleet," said poor Pedro, "and greater inhumanity and unthankfulness I think was never heard of among men."³

Yet the Spaniard comported himself most gallantly. Frobisher, in the largest ship of the English fleet, the *Triumph*, of 1100 tons, and Hawkins in the *Victory*, of 800, cannonaded him at a distance, but, night coming on, he was able to resist; and it was not till the following morning that he surrendered to the *Revenge*.⁴

¹ Herrera, III. iii. 100-102. Camden, III. 412. Bor, III. 323.

² Ibid.

³ Valdez to Philip ("Englished"), 31 Aug. 1588. (S. P. Office MSS.)

Compare Herrera, Bor, Camden, *ubi sup.*

⁴ MS. letter of Valdez before cited. Bor, Camden, *ubi sup.* Meteren, xv. 272. Herrera, III. iii. 100-102, who

Drake then received the gallant prisoner on board his flagship—much to the disgust and indignation of Frobisher and Hawkins, thus disappointed of their prize- and ransom-money¹—treated him with much courtesy, and gave his word of honour that he and his men should be treated fairly like good prisoners of war. This pledge was redeemed, for it was not the English, as it was the Spanish custom, to convert captives into slaves, but only to hold them for ransom. Valdez responded to Drake's politeness by kissing his hand, embracing him, and overpowering him with magnificent compliments.² He was then sent on board the Lord-Admiral, who received him with similar urbanity, and expressed his regret that so distinguished a personage should have been so coolly deserted by the Duke of Medina. Don Pedro then returned to the *Revenge*, where, as the guest of Drake, he was a witness to all subsequent events up to the 10th of August, on which day he was sent to London with some other officers,³ Sir Francis claiming his ransom as his lawful due.⁴

Here certainly was no very triumphant beginning for the Invincible Armada. On the very first day of their being in presence of the English fleet—then but sixty-seven in number, and vastly their inferior in size and weight of metal—they had lost the flag-ships of the Guipuzcoan and of the Andalusian squadrons, with a general-admiral, 450 officers and men, and some 100,000 ducats of treasure. They had been out-mancœuvred, out-sailed, and thoroughly maltreated by their antagonists, and they had been unable to inflict a single blow in return. Thus the "small fight" had been a cheerful one for the opponents of the Inquisition, and the English were proportionably encouraged.

draws entirely from the journal of a Spanish officer in the Armada, and who calls the two famous English naval commanders, Frobesquerio and Avesnisio.

Many English names look almost as strangely in their Spanish dress as these two familiar ones of Frobisher and Hawkins. Thus Dr. Bartholomew Clerk is called, for some mysterious reason, Dr. Quiberich; Col. Patton

becomes Col. Reyton; while Lord High Admiral Howard, of Effingham, figures in the chronicles as Carlos Haurat, Count of Contuberland. Herrera, III. p. 49.

¹ See page 525, note ¹.

² Meteren, Bor, *ubi sup*

³ Drake to Walsingham, 1588, in Barrow, p. 308,

31 July

10 Aug.

⁴ *Ibid.*

On Monday, 1st of August, Medina Sidonia placed the rear-guard—consisting of the galleasses, the galleons *St. Matthew*, *St. Luke*, *St. James*, and the *Florence* and other ships, forty-three in all—under command of Don Antonio de Leyva. He was instructed to entertain the enemy—so constantly hanging on the rear—to accept every chance of battle, and to come to close quarters whenever it should be possible. The Spaniards felt confident of sinking every ship in the English navy, if they could but once come to grappling; but it was growing more obvious every hour that the giving or withholding battle was entirely in the hands of their foes. Meantime—while the rear was thus protected by Leyva's division—the vanguard and main body of the Armada, led by the captain-general, would steadily pursue its way, according to the royal instructions, until it arrived at its appointed meeting-place with the Duke of Parma. Moreover, the Duke of Medina—dissatisfied with the want of discipline and of good seamanship hitherto displayed in his fleet—now took occasion to send a serjeant-major, with written sailing directions, on board each ship in the Armada, with express orders to hang every captain, without appeal or consultation, who should leave the position assigned him; and the hangmen were sent with the serjeant-majors to ensure immediate attention to these arrangements.¹ Juan Gil was at the same time sent off in a sloop to the Duke of Parma, to carry the news of the movements of the Armada, to request information as to the exact spot and moment of the junction, and to beg for pilots acquainted with the French and Flemish coasts. "In case of the slightest gale in the world," said Medina, "I don't know how or where to shelter such large ships as ours."²

Disposed in this manner, the Spaniards sailed leisurely along the English coast with light westerly breezes, watched closely by the Queen's fleet, which hovered at a moderate

¹ Herrera, III. iii. 105. "Sin replica ni consulta," &c.

² "Con el menor temporal del mundo non se sabe donde se pueden abrigar

naos tan grandes." Medina Sidonia to Parma, 2 Aug. 1588. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

distance to windward, without offering, that day, any obstruction to their course.

By five o'clock on Tuesday morning, 2nd of August, the Armada lay between Portland Bill and St. Albans' Head, when the wind shifted to the north-east, and gave ^{Tues, 2 Aug.} the Spaniards the weather-gage.¹ The English did ^{1588.} their best to get to windward, but the Duke, standing close into the land with the whole Armada, maintained his advantage. The English then went about, making a tack seaward, and were soon afterwards assaulted by the Spaniards. A long and spirited action ensued. Howard in his little *Ark-Royal*—"the odd ship of the world for all conditions"—was engaged at different times with Bertendona, of the Italian squadron, with Alonzo de Leyva in the *Ratta*, and with other large vessels. He was hard pressed for a time, but was gallantly supported by the *Nonpareil*, Captain Tanner; and after a long and confused combat, in which the *St. Mark*, the *St. Luke*, the *St. Matthew*, the *St. Philip*, the *St. John*, the *St. James*, the *St. John Baptist*, the *St. Martin*, and many other great galleons, with saintly and apostolic names, fought pell-mell with the *Lion*, the *Bear*, the *Bull*, the *Tiger*, the *Dreadnought*, the *Revenge*, the *Victory*, the *Triumph*, and other of the more profanely-baptized English ships, the Spaniards were again baffled in all their attempts to close with, and to board, their ever-attacking, ever-flying adversaries. The cannonading was incessant. "We had a sharp and a long fight," said Hawkins.² Boat-loads of men and munitions were perpetually arriving to the English, and many high-born volunteers—like Cumberland, Oxford, Northumberland, Raleigh, Brooke, Dudley, Willoughby, Noel, William Hatton, Thomas Cecil, and others—could no longer restrain their impatience, as the roar of battle sounded along the coasts of Dorset, but flocked merrily on board the ships of Drake, Hawkins,

¹ Declaration of the Proceedings of the two Fleets, July 19-31 (O. S.), 1588. (S. P. Office MS.) Herrera, III. iii. 106.

² Hawkins to Walsingham, ^{31 July} 10 Aug.

1588. (S. P. Office MS.) Herrera, III. iii. 106-108. Bor, III. 323. Meteren, xv. 273. Camden, III. 412, 413.

Howard, and Frobisher, or came in small vessels which they had chartered for themselves, in order to have their share in the delights of the long-expected struggle.¹

The action, irregular, desultory, but lively, continued nearly all day, and until the English had fired away most of their powder and shot.² The Spaniards, too, notwithstanding their years of preparation, were already short of light metal, and Medina Sidonia had been daily sending to Parma for a supply of four, six, and ten pound balls.³ So much lead and gunpowder had never before been wasted in a single day; for there was no great damage inflicted on either side. The artillery-practice was certainly not much to the credit of either nation.

"If her Majesty's ships had been manned with a full supply of good gunners," said honest William Thomas, an old artilleryman, "it would have been the woofullest time ever the Spaniard took in hand, and the most noble victory ever heard of would have been her Majesty's. But our sins were the cause that so much powder and shot were spent, so long time in fight, and in comparison so little harm done. It were greatly to be wished that her Majesty were no longer deceived in this way."⁴

Yet the English, at any rate, had succeeded in displaying their seamanship, if not their gunnery, to advantage. In vain the unwieldy hulks and galleons had attempted to grapple with their light-winged foes, who pelted them, braved them, damaged their sails and gearing, and then danced lightly off into the distance; until at last, as night fell, the wind came out from the west again, and the English regained and kept the weather-gage.

The Queen's fleet, now divided into four squadrons, under

¹ Herrera, Bor, Meteren, Camden, *ubi sup.*

² MS. Letter of Hawkins last cited.

³ Medina Sidonia to Parma, 2 Aug. 1588. (Arch. de Sim. MS.) Herrera, III. iii. 108.

⁴ William Thomas, master gunner of Flushing (who much complained

that the loss of its charter by the worshipful corporation of gunners, founded by Henry VIII., had caused its decay, and much mischief in consequence), to Burghley, ^{30 Sept.} 1588, ^{16 Oct.}

(S. P. Office MS.)

Howard, Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher, amounted to near one hundred sail, exclusive of Lord Henry Seymour's division, which was cruising in the Straits of Dover. But few of all this number were ships of war however, and the merchant vessels, although zealous and active enough, were not thought very effective. "If you had seen the simple service done by the merchants and coast ships," said Winter, "you would have said we had been little holpen by them, otherwise than that they did make a show."¹

All night the Spaniards, holding their course towards Calais, after the long but indecisive conflict had terminated, were closely pursued by their wary antagonists. On Wednesday, 3rd of August, there was some slight ^{3 Aug., Wed.} cannonading, with but slender results; and on ^{4 Aug., Thurs.} Thursday, the 4th, both fleets were off Dunnose, on the Isle of Wight. The great hulk *Santaña* and a galleon of Portugal having been somewhat damaged the previous day, were lagging behind the rest of the Armada, and were vigorously attacked by the *Triumph* and a few other vessels. Don Antonio de Leyva, with some of the galleasses and large galleons, came to the rescue, and Frobisher, although in much peril, maintained an unequal conflict, within close range, with great spirit.²

Seeing his danger, the Lord Admiral in the *Ark-Royal*, accompanied by the *Golden Lion*, the *White Bear*, the *Elizabeth*, the *Victory*, and the *Leicester*, bore boldly down into the very midst of the Spanish fleet, and laid himself within three or four hundred yards of Medina's flag-ship, the *St. Martin*, while his comrades were at equally close quarters with Vice-Admiral Recalde and the galleons of Oquendo, Mexia, and Almanza. It was the hottest conflict which had yet taken place.³ Here at last was thorough English work. The two great fleets, which were there to subjugate and to defend the realm of Elizabeth, were nearly yard-arm and yard-arm

¹ Sir W. Winter to Walsingham,
¹ Aug. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Declaration of the Proceedings,

æc. MS. before cited. Bor, Herreta, Meteren, Camden, *ubi sup.*

³ Ibid.

together—all England on the lee. Broadside after broadside of great guns, volley after volley of arquebusry from maintop and rigging, were warmly exchanged, and much damage was inflicted on the Spaniards, whose gigantic ships were so easy a mark to aim at, while from their turreted heights they themselves fired for the most part harmlessly over the heads of their adversaries. The leaders of the Armada, however, were encouraged, for they expected at last to come to even closer quarters, and there were some among the English who were mad enough to wish to board.

But so soon as Frobisher, who was the hero of the day, had extricated himself from his difficulty, the Lord-Admiral—having no intention of risking the existence of his fleet, and with it perhaps of the English crown, upon the hazard of a single battle, and having been himself somewhat damaged in the fight—gave the signal for retreat, and caused the *Ark-Royal* to be towed out of action. Thus the Spaniards were frustrated of their hopes, and the English, having inflicted much punishment at comparatively small loss to themselves, again stood off to windward, and the Armada continued its indolent course along the cliffs of Freshwater and Blackgang.¹

On Friday, 5th August, the English, having received men and munitions from shore, pursued their antagonists at a moderate distance; and the Lord-Admiral, profiting
 Frid., 5 Aug. 1588 by the pause—for it was almost a flat calm—sent for Martin Frobisher, John Hawkins, Roger Townsend, Lord Thomas Howard, son of the Duke of Norfolk, and Lord Edmund Sheffield, and on the deck of the *Royal Ark* conferred the honour of knighthood on each for his gallantry in the action of the previous day.² Medina Sidonia, on his part, was again despatching messenger after messenger to the Duke of Parma, asking for small shot, pilots, and forty fly-boats, with which to pursue the teasing English clippers.³ The Catholic Armada, he said, being so large and heavy, was quite in the

¹ Declaration, &c., MS. before cited.

² Camden, III. 414. Bor, III. 323, 324.

³ Medina Sidonia to Parma, 4 Aug. 1588. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

power of its adversaries, who could assault, retreat, fight, or leave off fighting, while he had nothing for it but to proceed, as expeditiously as might be, to his rendezvous in Calais roads.

And in Calais roads the great fleet—sailing slowly all next day in company with the English, without a shot being fired on either side—at last dropped anchor on Saturday afternoon, August 6th. 1588.

Here then the Invincible Armada had arrived at its appointed resting-place. Here the great junction of Medina Sidonia with the Duke of Parma was to be effected, and now at last the curtain was to rise upon the last act of the great drama so slowly and elaborately prepared.

That Saturday afternoon, Lord Henry Seymour and his squadron of sixteen lay between Dungeness and Folkestone, waiting the approach of the two fleets. He spoke several coasting-vessels coming from the west; but they could give him no information—strange to say—either of the Spaniards or of his own countrymen.¹ Seymour, having hardly three days' provision in his fleet, thought that there might be time to take in supplies, and so bore into the Downs. Hardly had he been there half an hour, when a pinnace arrived from the Lord-Admiral, with orders for Lord Henry's squadron to hold itself in readiness. There was no longer time for victualling, and very soon afterwards the order was given to make sail and bear for the French coast. The wind was however so light, that the whole day was spent before Seymour with his ships could cross the channel. At last, towards seven in the evening, he saw the great Spanish Armada drawn up in a half-moon, and riding at anchor—the ships very near each other—a little to the eastward of Calais, and very near the shore.² The English, under Howard, Drake, Frobisher, and Hawkins, were slowly following, and—so soon as Lord Henry, arriving from the opposite shore, had made

¹ Sir. W. Winter to Walsingham, $\frac{1}{11}$ Aug., 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² *Ibid.*

his junction with them—the whole combined fleet dropped anchor likewise very near Calais, and within one mile and a half of the Spaniards. That invincible force had at last almost reached its destination. It was now to receive the cooperation of the great Farnese, at the head of an army of veterans, disciplined on a hundred battle-fields, confident from countless victories, and arrayed, as they had been with ostentatious splendour, to follow the most brilliant general in Christendom on his triumphal march into the capital of England. The long-threatened invasion was no longer an idle figment of politicians, maliciously spread abroad to poison men's minds as to the intentions of a long-enduring but magnanimous, and on the whole friendly sovereign. The mask had been at last thrown down, and the mild accents of Philip's diplomatists and their English dupes, interchanging protocols so decorously month after month on the sands of Bourbourg, had been drowned by the peremptory voice of English and Spanish artillery, suddenly breaking in upon their placid conferences. It had now become supererogatory to ask for Alexander's word of honour whether he had ever heard of Cardinal Allan's pamphlet, or whether his master contemplated hostilities against Queen Elizabeth.

Never, since England was England, had such a sight been seen as now revealed itself in those narrow straits between Dover and Calais. Along that long, low, sandy shore, and quite within the range of the Calais fortifications, one hundred and thirty Spanish ships—the greater number of them the largest and most heavily armed in the world—lay face to face, and scarcely out of cannon-shot, with one hundred and fifty English sloops and frigates, the strongest and swiftest that the island could furnish, and commanded by men whose exploits had rung through the world.

Farther along the coast, invisible, but known to be performing a most perilous and vital service, was a squadron of Dutch vessels of all sizes, lining both the inner and outer edges of the sandbanks off the Flemish coasts, and swarming in all the estuaries and inlets of that intricate and dangerous

cruising-ground between Dunkerk and Walcheren. Those fleets of Holland and Zeeland, numbering some one hundred and fifty galleons, sloops, and fly-boats, under Warmond, Nassau, Van der Does, de Moor, and Rosendael, lay patiently blockading every possible egress from Newport, or Gravelines, or Sluys, or Flushing, or Dunkerk, and longing to grapple with the Duke of Parma,¹ so soon as his fleet of gunboats and hoys, packed with his Spanish and Italian veterans, should venture to set forth upon the sea for their long-prepared exploit.

It was a pompous spectacle, that midsummer night, upon those narrow seas. The moon, which was at the full, was rising calmly upon a scene of anxious expectation. Would she not be looking, by the morrow's night, upon a subjugated England, a re-enslaved Holland—upon the downfall of civil and religious liberty? Those ships of Spain, which lay there with their banners waving in the moonlight, discharging salvoes of anticipated triumph and filling the air with strains of insolent music, would they not, by daybreak, be moving straight to their purpose, bearing the conquerors of the world to the scene of their cherished hopes?

That English fleet, too, which rode there at anchor, so anxiously on the watch—would that swarm of nimble, lightly-handled, but slender vessels, which had held their own hitherto in hurried and desultory skirmishes—be able to cope with their great antagonist now that the moment had arrived for the death grapple? Would not Howard, Drake, Frobisher, Seymour, Winter, and Hawkins, be swept out of the straits at last, yielding an open passage to Medina, Oquendo, Recalde, and Farnese? Would those Hollanders and Zeelanders, cruising so vigilantly among their treacherous shallows, dare to maintain their post, now that the terrible 'Holofernese,' with his invincible legions, was resolved to come forth?

So soon as he had cast anchor, Howard despatched a pinnacle to the *Vanguard*, with a message to Winter to come on

¹ Bor, III. 321, *seq.* Meteren, xv. 272, 273.

board the flag-ship.¹ When Sir William reached the *Ark*, it was already nine in the evening. He was anxiously consulted by the Lord-Admiral as to the course now to be taken. Hitherto the English had been teasing and perplexing an enemy, on the retreat, as it were, by the nature of his instructions. Although anxious to give battle, the Spaniard was forbidden to descend upon the coast until after his junction with Parma. So the English had played a comparatively easy game, hanging upon their enemy's skirts, maltreating him as they doubled about him, cannonading him from a distance, and slipping out of his reach at their pleasure. But he was now to be met face to face, and the fate of the two free commonwealths of the world was upon the issue of the struggle, which could no longer be deferred.

Winter, standing side by side with the Lord-Admiral on the deck of the little *Ark-Royal*, gazed for the first time on those enormous galleons and galleys with which his companion was already sufficiently familiar.

"Considering their hugeness," said he, "'twill not be possible to remove them but by a device."²

Then remembering, in a lucky moment, something that he had heard four years before of the fire ships sent by the Antwerpens against Parma's bridge—the inventor of which, the Italian Gianibelli, was at that very moment constructing fortifications on the Thames³ to assist the English against his old enemy Farnese—Winter suggested that some stratagem of the same kind should be attempted against the Invincible Armada.⁴ There was no time nor opportunity to prepare such submarine volcanoes as had been employed on that memorable occasion; but burning ships at least might be sent among the fleet. Some damage would doubtless be thus inflicted by the fire, and perhaps a panic, suggested by the memories of Antwerp and by the knowledge that the famous Mantuan wizard

¹ Winter to Walsingham, MS. already cited.

² Ibid.

³ *Meteren*, xv. 272.

⁴ Thus distinctly stated by Sir Wm. Winter, in his admirable letter of

¹ Aug. (MS. already cited.)
¹¹

was then a resident of England, would be still more effective. In Winter's opinion, the Armada might at least be compelled to slip its cables, and be thrown into some confusion if the project were fairly carried out.

Howard approved of the device, and determined to hold, next morning, a council of war for arranging the details of its execution.¹

While the two sat in the cabin, conversing thus earnestly, there had well nigh been a serious misfortune. The ship, *White Bear*, of 1000 tons burthen, and three others of the English fleet, all tangled together, came drifting with the tide against the *Ark*. There were many yards carried away, much tackle spoiled, and for a time there was great danger, in the opinion of Winter, that some of the very best ships in the fleet would be crippled and quite destroyed on the eve of a general engagement. By alacrity and good handling, however, the ships were separated, and the ill-consequences of an accident—such as had already proved fatal to several Spanish vessels—were fortunately averted.²

Next day, Sunday, 7th August, the two great fleets were still lying but a mile and a half apart, calmly gazing at each other, and rising and falling at their anchors as idly Sun., 7 Aug. 1588. as if some vast summer regatta were the only purpose of that great assemblage of shipping. Nothing as yet was heard of Farnese. Thus far, at least, the Hollanders had held him at bay, and there was still breathing-time before the catastrophe. So Howard hung out his signal for council early in the morning, and very soon after Drake and Hawkins, Seymour, Winter, and the rest, were gravely consulting in his cabin.³

¹ Winter's Letter, MS.

It has been stated by many writers—Camden, III. 415, Meteren, xv. 273, and others—that this project of the fire-ships was directly commanded by the Queen. Others attribute the device to the Lord Admiral (Bor., III. 324), or to Drake (Strada, ix. 559), while Coloma (I. 7) prefers to regard the whole matter as quite a trifling

accident, "harto pequeño accidente;" but there is no doubt that the merit of the original suggestion belongs exclusively to Winter. To give the glory of the achievement to her Majesty, who knew nothing of it whatever, was a most gratuitous exhibition of loyalty.

² Winter's Letter, MS.

³ Ibid.

It was decided that Winter's suggestion should be acted upon, and Sir Henry Palmer was immediately despatched in a pinnace to Dover, to bring off a number of old vessels fit to be fired, together with a supply of light wood, tar, rosin, sulphur, and other combustibles, most adapted to the purpose.¹ But as time wore away, it became obviously impossible for Palmer to return that night, and it was determined to make the most of what could be collected in the fleet itself.² Otherwise it was to be feared that the opportunity might be forever lost. Parma, crushing all opposition, might suddenly appear at any moment upon the channel; and the whole Spanish Armada, placing itself between him and his enemies, would engage the English and Dutch fleets, and cover his passage to Dover. It would then be too late to think of the burning ships.

On the other hand, upon the decks of the Armada, there was an impatience that night which increased every hour. The governor of Calais, M. de Gourdon, had sent his nephew on board the flag-ship of Medina Sidonia, with courteous salutations, professions of friendship, and bountiful refreshments. There was no fear—now that Mucio was for the time in the ascendancy—that the schemes of Philip would be interfered with by France. The governor, had, however, sent serious warning of the dangerous position in which the Armada had placed itself. He was quite right. Calais roads were no safe anchorage for huge vessels like those of Spain and Portugal; for the tides and cross-currents to which they were exposed were most treacherous.³ It was calm enough at the moment, but a westerly gale might, in a few hours, drive the whole fleet hopelessly among the sand-banks of the dangerous Flemish coast. Moreover, the Duke, although tolerably well furnished with charts and pilots for the English coast, was comparatively unprovided against the dangers which might beset him off Dunkerk, Newport, and Flushing. He had sent messengers, day after day, to Farnese, begging for assistance

¹ Winter's Letter, MS

² Ibid.

³ Herrera, III. iii. 108.

of various kinds, but, above all, imploring his instant presence on the field of action.¹ It was the time and place for Alexander to assume the chief command. The Armada was ready to make front against the English fleet on the left, while on the right, the Duke, thus protected, might proceed across the channel and take possession of England.

And the impatience of the soldiers and sailors on board the fleet was equal to that of their commanders. There was London almost before their eyes—a huge mass of treasure, richer and more accessible than those mines beyond the Atlantic which had so often rewarded Spanish chivalry with fabulous wealth. And there were men in those galleons who remembered the sack of Antwerp, eleven years before—men who could tell, from personal experience, how helpless was a great commercial city, when once in the clutch of disciplined brigands—men who, in that dread ‘fury of Antwerp,’ had enriched themselves in an hour with the accumulations of a merchant’s life-time, and who had slain fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, brides and bridegrooms, before each others’ eyes, until the number of inhabitants butchered in the blazing streets rose to many thousands; and the plunder from palaces and warehouses was counted by millions, before the sun had set on the ‘great fury.’ Those Spaniards, and Italians, and Walloons, were now thirsting for more gold, for more blood; and as the capital of England was even more wealthy and far more defenceless than the commercial metropolis of the Netherlands had been, so it was resolved that the London ‘fury’ should be more thorough and more productive than the ‘fury’ of Antwerp, at the memory of which the world still shuddered. And these professional soldiers had been taught to consider the English as a pacific, delicate, effeminate race, dependent on good living, without experience of war, quickly fatigued and discouraged,² and even more easily to be plundered and butchered than were the excellent burghers of Antwerp.

¹ Medina Sidonia to Parma, 2 Aug. 1588, 4 Aug. 1588, 5 Aug. 1588. Parma to Philip II., 7 Aug. 1588, 8 Aug. 1588. (Arch. de Simancas,

MSS.)

² Examination of Don Diego de Pimental, in Bor. III. 325, 326.

And so these southern conquerors looked down from their great galleons and galleasses upon the English vessels. More than three quarters of them were merchantmen. There was no comparison whatever between the relative strength of the fleets. In number they were about equal—being each from one hundred and thirty to one hundred and fifty strong—but the Spaniards had twice the tonnage of the English, four times the artillery, and nearly three times the number of men.

Where was Farnese? Most impatiently the Golden Duke paced the deck of the *Saint Martin*. Most eagerly were thousands of eyes strained towards the eastern horizon to catch the first glimpse of Parma's flotilla. But the day wore on to its close, and still the same inexplicable and mysterious silence prevailed. There was utter solitude on the waters in the direction of Gravelines and Dunkerque—not a sail upon the sea in the quarter where bustle and activity had been most expected. The mystery was profound, for it had never entered the head of any man in the Armada that Alexander could not come out when he chose.¹

And now to impatience succeeded suspicion and indignation; and there were curses upon sluggishness and upon treachery. For in the horrible atmosphere of duplicity, in which all Spaniards and Italians of that epoch lived, every man suspected his brother, and already Medina Sidonia suspected Farnese of playing him false. There were whispers of collusion between the Duke and the English commissioners at Bourbourg. There were hints that Alexander was playing his own game, that he meant to divide the sovereignty of the Netherlands with the heretic Elizabeth, to desert his great trust, and to effect, if possible, the destruction of his master's Armada, and the downfall of his master's sovereignty in the north. Men told each other, too, of a vague rumour, concerning which Alexander might have received information, and in which many believed, that Medina Sidonia was the bearer of secret orders to throw Farnese into bondage, so soon as he

¹ Examination, &c., last cited.

should appear, to send him a disgraced captive back to Spain for punishment, and to place the baton of command in the hand of the Duke of Pastrana, Philip's bastard by the Eboli.¹ Thus, in the absence of Alexander, all was suspense and suspicion. It seemed possible that disaster instead of triumph was in store for them through the treachery of the commander-in-chief. Four and twenty hours and more, they had been lying in that dangerous roadstead, and although the weather had been calm and the sea tranquil, there seemed something brooding in the atmosphere.

As the twilight deepened, the moon became totally obscured, dark cloud-masses spread over the heavens, the sea grew black, distant thunder rolled, and the sob of an approaching tempest became distinctly audible.² Such indications of a westerly gale were not encouraging to those cumbrous vessels, with the treacherous quicksands of Flanders under their lee.

At an hour past midnight, it was so dark that it was difficult for the most practiced eye to pierce far into the gloom. But a faint drip of oars now struck the ears of the Spaniards as they watched from the decks. A few moments afterwards the sea became suddenly luminous, and six flaming vessels appeared at a slight distance, bearing steadily down upon them before the wind and tide.³

There were men in the Armada who had been at the siege of Antwerp only three years before. They remembered with horror the devil-ships of Gianibelli, those floating volcanoes, which had seemed to rend earth and ocean, whose explosion had laid so many thousands of soldiers dead at a blow, and which had shattered the bridge and floating forts of Farnese, as though they had been toys of glass. They knew, too, that the famous engineer was at that moment in England.

In a moment one of those horrible panics, which spread with such contagious rapidity among large bodies of men, seized upon the Spaniards. There was a yell throughout the

¹ Strada, II. x. 567, 568.

² Strada, II. x. 560.

³ Winter's Letter, MS. already cited. Compare Herrera, III. iii. 108.

Meteren, xv. 273. Bor, III. 324, seq.
Strada, II. x. 560, 561. Camden,
III. 415.

fleet—"the fire-ships of Antwerp, the fire-ships of Antwerp!" and in an instant every cable was cut, and frantic attempts were made by each galleon and galeasse to escape what seemed imminent destruction. The confusion was beyond description. Four or five of the largest ships became entangled with each other. Two others¹ were set on fire by the flaming vessels, and were consumed. Medina Sidonia, who had been warned, even before his departure from Spain,² that some such artifice would probably be attempted, and who had even, early that morning, sent out a party of sailors in a pinnace³ to search for indications of the scheme, was not surprised or dismayed. He gave orders—as well as might be—that every ship, after the danger should be passed, was to return to its post, and await his further orders.⁴ But it was useless, in that moment of unreasonable panic to issue commands. The despised Mantuan, who had met with so many rebuffs at Philip's court, and who—owing to official incredulity—had been but partially successful in his magnificent enterprise at Antwerp, had now, by the mere terror of his name, inflicted more damage on Philip's Armada than had hitherto been accomplished by Howard and Drake, Hawkins and Frobisher, combined.

So long as night and darkness lasted, the confusion and uproar continued. When the Monday morning dawned, several of the Spanish vessels lay disabled, while the rest of the fleet was seen at a distance of two leagues from Calais, driving towards the Flemish coast. The threatened gale had not yet begun to blow, but there were fresh squalls from the W.S.W., which, to such awkward sailors as the Spanish vessels, were difficult to contend with. On the other hand, the English fleet were all astir, and ready to pursue the Spaniards, now rapidly drifting into the North

¹ This fact, mentioned by no historian, distinctly appears from Winter's Letter, so often cited. "We perceived that there were *two* great fires more than ours (previously stated by him as six in number), and far greater and huger than any our fired vessels

could make."

² "Advertido va el duque del intento de Drake quanto al quemar los navios." Philip II. to Mendoza, 21st June, 1588. (Archives de Simancas [Paris], MS.)

³ Herrera, III. iii. 108.

⁴ Ibid.

Sea. In the immediate neighbourhood of Calais, the flagship of the squadron of galleasses, commanded by Don Hugo de Moncada, was discovered using her foresail and oars, and endeavouring to enter the harbour. She had been damaged by collision with the *St. John of Sicily* and other ships, during the night's panic, and had her rudder quite torn away.¹ She was the largest and most splendid vessel in the Armada—the show-ship of the fleet, “the very glory and stay of the Spanish navy;”² and during the previous two days she had been visited and admired by great numbers of Frenchmen from the shore.

Lord Admiral Howard bore down upon her at once, but as she was already in shallow water, and was rowing steadily towards the town, he saw that the *Ark* could not follow with safety. So he sent his long-boat to cut her out, manned with fifty or sixty volunteers, most of them “as valiant in courage as gentle in birth”³—as a partaker in the adventure declared. The *Margaret and Joan* of London, also following in pursuit, ran herself a-ground, but the master despatched his pinnace with a body of musketeers, to aid in the capture of the galleasse.⁴

That huge vessel failed to enter the harbour, and stuck fast upon the bar. There was much dismay on board, but Don Hugo prepared resolutely to defend himself. The quays of Calais and the line of the French shore were lined with thousands of eager spectators, as the two boats—rowing steadily toward a galleasse, which carried forty brass pieces of artillery, and was manned with three hundred soldiers and four hundred and fifty slaves—seemed rushing upon their own destruction. Of these daring Englishmen, patricians and plebeians together, in two open pinnaces, there were not more than one hundred in number, all told. They soon laid themselves close to the *Capitana*, far below her lofty sides, and called on Don Hugo to surrender. The answer was a

¹ ‘Declaration of the Proceedings of the two Fleets,’ MS. already cited.

² R. Tomson to —, ^{30 July} 1588.
(S. P. Office MS.) ^{9 Aug.} ³ Ibid. ⁴ Ibid.

smile of derision from the haughty Spaniard, as he looked down upon them from what seemed an inaccessible height. Then one Wilton, coxswain of the *Delight*, of Winter's squadron, clambered up to the enemy's deck and fell dead the same instant.¹ Then the English volunteers opened a volley upon the Spaniards. "They seemed safely ensconced in their ships," said bold Dick Tomson, of the *Margaret and Joan*, "while we in our open pinnaces, and far under them, had nothing to shroud and cover us." Moreover the numbers were seven hundred and fifty to one hundred. But the Spaniards, still quite disconcerted by the events of the preceding night, seemed under a spell. Otherwise it would have been an easy matter for the great galleasse to annihilate such puny antagonists in a very short space of time.²

The English pelted the Spaniards quite cheerfully, however, with arquebus-shot, whenever they showed themselves above the bulwarks, picked off a considerable number, and sustained a rather severe loss themselves, Lieutenant Preston, of the *Ark-Royal*, among others, being dangerously wounded. "We had a pretty skirmish for half-an-hour," said Tomson. At last Don Hugo de Moncada, furious at the inefficiency of his men, and leading them forward in person, fell back on his deck with a bullet through both eyes.³ The panic was instantaneous, for, meantime, several other English boats—some with eight, ten, or twelve men on board—were seen pulling towards the galleasse; while the dismayed soldiers at once leaped overboard on the land side, and attempted to escape by swimming and wading to the shore. Some of them succeeded, but the greater number were drowned. The few who remained—not more than twenty in all⁴—hoisted two handkerchiefs upon two rapiers as a signal of truce.⁵ The English, accepting it as a signal of defeat, scrambled

¹ Winter to Walsingham, MS. before cited.

² Tomson's Letter, MS. Compare Herrera, III. iii. 108. Bor, III. 324, 325. Meteren, xv. 273. Camden,

III. 415. Strada, II. ix. 561. Coloma, I. 7, 8.

⁴ Coloma, *ubi sup.*

⁵ Tomson's Letter, MS. before cited.

³ Ibid.

with great difficulty up the lofty sides of the *Capitana*, and, for an hour and a half, occupied themselves most agreeably in plundering the ship and in liberating the slaves.¹

It was their intention, with the flood-tide, to get the vessel off, as she was but slightly damaged, and of very great value. But a serious obstacle arose to this arrangement. For presently a boat came along-side, with young M. de Gourdon and another French captain, and hailed the galeasse. There was nobody on board who could speak French but Richard Tomson. So Richard returned the hail, and asked their business.² They said they came from the governor.

"And what is the governor's pleasure?" asked Tomson, when they had come up the side.

"The governor has stood and beheld your fight, and rejoiced in your victory," was the reply; "and he says that for your prowess and manhood you well deserve the pillage of the galeasse. He requires and commands you, however, not to attempt carrying off either the ship or its ordnance; for she lies a-ground under the battery of his castle, and within his jurisdiction, and does of right appertain to him."

This seemed hard upon the hundred volunteers, who, in their two open boats, had so manfully carried a ship of 1200 tons, 40 guns, and 750 men; but Richard answered diplomatically.

"We thank M. de Gourdon," said he, "for granting the pillage to mariners and soldiers who had fought for it, and we acknowledge that without his good-will we cannot carry away anything we have got, for the ship lies on ground directly under his batteries and bulwarks. Concerning the ship and ordnance, we pray that he would send a pinnace to my Lord Admiral Howard, who is here in person hard by, from whom he will have an honourable and friendly answer, which we shall all obey."

With this the French officers, being apparently content, were about to depart; and it is not impossible that

¹ Bor, III. 325.

² Tomson's Letter, MS. before cited.

the soft answer might have obtained the galeasse and the ordnance, notwithstanding the arrangement which Philip II. had made with his excellent friend Henry III. for aid and comfort to Spanish vessels in French ports. Unluckily, however, the inclination for plunder being rife that morning, some of the Englishmen hustled their French visitors, plundered them of their rings and jewels, as if they had been enemies, and then permitted them to depart. They rowed off to the shore, vowing vengeance, and within a few minutes after their return the battery of the fort was opened upon the English, and they were compelled to make their escape as they could with the plunder already secured, leaving the galeasse in the possession of M. de Gourdon.¹

This adventure being terminated, and the pinnaces having returned to the fleet, the Lord-Admiral, who had been lying off and on,² now bore away with all his force in pursuit of the Spaniards. The Invincible Armada, already sorely crippled, was standing N.N.E. directly before a fresh topsail-breeze from the S.S.W. The English came up with them soon after nine o'clock A.M. off Gravelines, and found them sailing in a half-moon, the admiral and vice-admiral in the centre, and the flanks protected by the three remaining galeasses and by the great galleons of Portugal.³

Seeing the enemy approaching, Medina Sidonia ordered his whole fleet to luff to the wind, and prepare for action.⁴ The wind shifting a few points, was now at W.N.W., so that the English had both the weather-gage and the tide in their favour. A general combat began at about ten, and it was soon obvious to the Spaniards that their adversaries were intending warm work. Sir Francis Drake in the *Revenge*, followed by Frobisher in the *Triumph*, Hawkins in the *Victory*, and some smaller vessels, made the first attack upon the Spanish flag-ships. Lord Henry in the *Rainbow*, Sir Henry Palmer in the *Antelope*, and others, engaged with three of the largest

¹ Tomson's Letter, MS. before cited. Compare Herrera, Bor, Meteren, Camden, Strada, Coloma, *ubi sup.*

² Winter's Letter, MS. before cited.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Herrera, III. iii. 110.

galleons of the Armada, while Sir William Winter in the *Vanguard*, supported by most of his squadron, charged the starboard wing.¹

The portion of the fleet thus assaulted fell back into the main body. Four of the ships ran foul of each other,² and Winter, driving into their centre, found himself within musket-shot of many of their most formidable ships.

"I tell you, on the credit of a poor gentleman," he said, "that there were five hundred discharges of demi-cannon, culverin, and demi-culverin, from the *Vanguard*; and when I was farthest off in firing my pieces, I was not out of shot of their harquebus, and most time within speech, one of another."³

The battle lasted six hours long, hot and furious; for now there was no excuse for retreat on the part of the Spaniards, but, on the contrary, it was the intention of the Captain-General to return to his station off Calais, if it were within his power. Nevertheless the English still partially maintained the tactics which had proved so successful, and resolutely refused the fierce attempts of the Spaniards to lay themselves along-side. Keeping within musket-range, the well-disciplined English mariners poured broadside after broadside against the towering ships of the Armada, which afforded so easy a mark; while the Spaniards, on their part, found it impossible, while wasting incredible quantities of powder and shot, to inflict any severe damage on their enemies. Throughout the action, not an English ship was destroyed, and not a hundred men were killed.⁴ On the other hand, all the best ships of the Spaniards were riddled through and through, and with masts and yards shattered, sails and rigging torn to shreds, and a north-west wind still drifting them towards the fatal sand-banks of Holland, they laboured heavily in a chopping sea, firing wildly, and receiving tremendous punishment at the hands of Howard,

¹ Herrera, last cited. Winter's Letter, MS. Lord H. Seymour to the Queen, in Barrow, 305.

² Winter's Letter, MS.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Herrera, III. iii. 110.

Drake, Seymour, Winter, and their followers. Not even master-gunner Thomas could complain that day of "blind exercise" on the part of the English, with "little harm done" to the enemy. There was scarcely a ship in the Armada that did not suffer severely;¹ for nearly all were engaged in that memorable action off the sands of Gravelines. The Captain-General himself, Admiral Recalde, Alonzo de Leyva, Oquendo, Diego Flores de Valdez, Bertendona, Don Francisco de Toledo, Don Diego de Pimentel, Telles Enriquez, Alonzo de Luzon, Garibay, with most of the great galleons and galeasses, were in the thickest of the fight, and one after the other each of those huge ships was disabled. Three sank before the fight was over, many others were soon drifting helpless wrecks towards a hostile shore, and, before five o'clock in the afternoon, at least sixteen of their best ships had been sacrificed, and from four to five thousand soldiers killed.²

Nearly all the largest vessels of the Armada, therefore, having been disabled or damaged—according to a Spanish eye-witness—and all their small shot exhausted, Medina Sidonia reluctantly gave orders to retreat. The Captain-General was a bad sailor, but he was a chivalrous Spaniard of ancient Gothic blood, and he felt deep mortification at the plight of his invincible fleet, together with undisguised resentment against Alexander Farnese, through whose treachery and incapacity he considered the great Catholic cause to have been so foully sacrificed. Crippled, maltreated, and diminished in number, as were his ships, he would have still faced the enemy, but the winds and currents were fast driving him on a lee-shore, and the pilots, one and all, assured him

¹ "God hath mightily preserved her Majesty's forces with the least losses that ever hath been heard of, being within the compass of so great volleys of shot, both small and great. I verily believe there is not three-score men lost of her Majesty's forces." Captain J. Fenner to Wal-

tingham, $\frac{4}{14}$ Aug. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Bor, III. 327. Herrera, *ubi sup.* 'Declaration of the Proceedings,' MS.

Howard to Walsingham, $\frac{7}{17}$ Aug. 1588.

Drake to the Queen, $\frac{8}{15}$ Aug. 1588. in Barrow, 306-310.

that it would be inevitable destruction to remain. After a slight and very ineffectual attempt to rescue Don Diego de Pimentel in the *St. Matthew*—who refused to leave his disabled ship—and Don Francisco de Toledo, whose great galleon, the *St. Philip*, was fast driving, a helpless wreck, towards Zealand, the Armada bore away N.N.E. into the open sea, leaving those, who could not follow, to their fate.¹

The *St. Matthew*, in a sinking condition, hailed a Dutch fisherman, who was offered a gold chain to pilot her into Newport. But the fisherman, being a patriot, steered her close to the Holland fleet, where she was immediately assaulted by Admiral Van der Does, to whom, after a two hours' bloody fight, she struck her flag.² Don Diego, marshal of the camp to the famous legion of Sicily, brother of the Marquis of Tavera, nephew of the Viceroy of Sicily, uncle to the Viceroy of Naples, and numbering as many titles, dignities, and high affinities as could be expected of a grandee of the first class, was taken, with his officers, to the Hague.³ "I was the means," said Captain Borlase, "that the best sort were saved, and the rest were cast overboard and slain at our entry. He fought with us two hours, and hurt divers of our men, but at last yielded."⁴

John Van der Does, his captor, presented the banner of the *Saint Matthew* to the great church of Leyden, where—such was its prodigious length—it hung from floor to ceiling without being entirely unrolled;⁵ and there it hung, from generation to generation, a worthy companion to the Spanish flags which had been left behind when Valdez abandoned the siege of that heroic city fifteen years before.

The galleon *St. Philip*, one of the four largest ships in the Armada, dismasted and foundering, drifted towards Newport, where camp-marshal Don Francisco de Toledo hoped in vain for succour. La Motte made a feeble attempt at rescue, but some vessels from the Holland fleet, being much more

¹ Herrera, III. iii. 109. Meteren, |
xv. 273, 274. Bor, III. 325. Camden, |
III. 415, 416.

² Bor, *ubi sup.*
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³ Ibid.

⁴ Borlase to Walsingham, $\frac{3}{18}$ Aug
1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁵ Bor, Meteren, *ubi sup.*

active, seized the unfortunate galleon, and carried her into Flushing. The captors found forty-eight brass cannon and other things of value on board, but there were some casks of Ribadavia wine which was more fatal to her enemies than those pieces of artillery had proved. For while the rebels were refreshing themselves, after the fatigues of the capture, with large draughts of that famous vintage, the *St. Philip*, which had been bored through and through with English shot, and had been rapidly filling with water, gave a sudden lurch, and went down in a moment, carrying with her to the bottom three hundred of those convivial Hollanders.¹

A large Biscay galleon, too, of Recalde's squadron, much disabled in action, and now, like many others, unable to follow the Armada, was summoned by Captain Cross, of the *Hope*, 48 guns, to surrender. Although foundering, she resisted, and refused to strike her flag. One of her officers attempted to haul down her colours, and was run through the body by the captain, who, in his turn, was struck dead by a brother of the officer thus slain. In the midst of this quarrel the ship went down with all her crew.²

Six hours and more, from ten till nearly five, the fight had lasted—a most cruel battle, as the Spaniard declared. There were men in the Armada who had served in the action of Lepanto,³ and who declared that famous encounter to have been far surpassed in severity and spirit by this fight off Gravelines. “Surely every man in our fleet did well,” said Winter, “and the slaughter the enemy received was great.”⁴

¹ Coloma, I. 8^{vo}. Compare Meteren, Bor, *ubi sup.* et al.

² Meteren, xv. 273^{vo}, who relates the anecdote on the authority of some sailors who made their escape by jumping overboard, and who were picked up just before she sank. ‘Declaration of the Proceedings,’ &c. MS.

³ Howard to Walsingham, ²/₁₈ Aug. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.) “Some make little account,” says the Lord Admiral, “of the Spanish forces by sea, but, I do warrant you, all the world never saw such a force as their’s was. And some Spanish there

we have taken that were in the fight of Lepanto, do say, that the worst of our four fights that we have had with them did exceed far the fight they had there; and they say that at some of our fights we had twenty times as much great shot there played than they had there.”

“It was a most cruel battle” (*crudelissima batalla*) says Herrera, from the journal of a Spaniard present, III. 108.

⁴ Winter’s Letter, ¹/₁₁ Aug. 1588. MS. before cited.

Nor would the Spaniards have escaped even worse punishment, had not, most unfortunately, the penurious policy of the Queen's government rendered her ships useless at last, even in this supreme moment. They never ceased cannonading the discomfited enemy until the ammunition was exhausted. "When the cartridges were all spent," said Winter, "and the munitions in some vessels gone altogether, we ceased fighting, but followed the enemy, who still kept away."¹ And the enemy—although still numerous, and seeming strong enough, if properly handled, to destroy the whole English fleet—fled before them. There remained more than fifty Spanish vessels, above six hundred tons in size, besides sixty hulks and other vessels of less account; while in the whole English navy were but thirteen ships of or above that burthen. "Their force is wonderful great and strong," said Howard, "but we pluck their feathers by little and little."²

For Medina Sidonia had now satisfied himself that he should never succeed in boarding those hard-fighting and swift-sailing craft, while, meantime, the horrible panic of Sunday night and the succession of fights throughout the following day, had completely disorganized his followers. Crippled, riddled, shorn, but still numerous, and by no means entirely vanquished, the Armada was flying with a gentle breeze before an enemy who, to save his existence, could not have fired a broadside.

"Though our powder and shot was well nigh spent," said the Lord-Admiral, "we put on a brag countenance and gave them chase, as though we had wanted nothing."³ And the brag countenance was successful, for that "one day's service had much appalled the enemy,"⁴ as Drake observed; and still the Spaniards fled with a freshening gale all through the Monday night. "A thing greatly to be regarded," said Fenner, of the *Nonpareil*, "is that the Almighty had stricken them with a wonderful fear."

¹ Winter's Letter, MS. last cited.

² Howard to Walsingham, ^{29 July}
1588. (S. P. Office MS.) ^{8 Aug.}

³ Same to same, ⁷
Aug. 1588, in Barrow, 306, 307.

⁴ Drake to Walsingham, in Barrow, 301.

I have hardly seen any of their companies succoured of the extremities which befell them after their fights, but they have been left at utter ruin, while they bear as much sail as ever they possibly can.”¹

On Tuesday morning, 9th August, the English ships were off the Isle of Walcheren, at a safe distance from the shore
Tues., Aug. 9, 1588. “The wind is hanging westerly,” said Richard Tomson, of the *Margaret and Joan*, “and we drive our enemies apace, much marvelling in what port they will direct themselves. Those that are left alive are so weak and heartless that they could be well content to lose all charges and to be at home, both rich and poor.”²

“In my conscience,” said Sir William Winter, “I think the Duke would give his dukedom to be in Spain again.”³

The English ships, one hundred and four in number,⁴ being that morning half-a-league to windward, the Duke gave orders for the whole Armada to lay to and await their approach. But the English had no disposition to engage, for at that moment the instantaneous destruction of their enemies seemed inevitable. Ill-managed, panic-struck, staggering before their foes, the Spanish fleet was now close upon the fatal sands of Zeeland. Already there were but six and a-half fathoms of water, rapidly shoaling under their keels, and the pilots told Medina that all were irretrievably lost, for the freshening north-wester was driving them steadily upon the banks. The English, easily escaping the danger, hauled their wind, and paused to see the ruin of the proud Armada accomplished before their eyes. Nothing but a change of wind at the instant could save them from perdition. There was a breathless shudder of suspense, and then there came the change. Just as the foremost ships were about to ground on the Ooster Zand, the wind suddenly veered to the south-west, and the Spanish ships quickly squaring their sails to the new impulse, stood out once more into the open sea.⁵

¹ Fenner to Walsingham, $\frac{4}{14}$ Aug. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Tomson's Letters, MS. before cited.

³ Winter's Letter, MS. before cited.

⁴ Herrera, 110.

⁵ Ibid. Camden, III. 416.

All that day the galleons and galleasses, under all the canvas which they dared to spread, continued their flight before the south-westerly breeze, and still the Lord-Admiral, maintaining the brag countenance, followed, at an easy distance, the retreating foe. At 4 p. m., Howard fired a signal gun, and ran up a flag of council. Winter could not go, for he had been wounded in action, but Seymour and Drake, Hawkins, Frobisher, and the rest were present, and it was decided that Lord Henry should return, accompanied by Winter and the rest of the inner squadron, to guard the Thames mouth against any attempt of the Duke of Parma, while the Lord-Admiral and the rest of the navy should continue the pursuit of the Armada.¹

Very wroth was Lord Henry at being deprived of his share in the chase. "The Lord-Admiral was altogether desirous to have me strengthen him," said he, "and having done so to the utmost of my good-will and the venture of my life, and to the distressing of the Spaniards, which was thoroughly done on the Monday last, I now find his Lordship jealous and loath to take part of the honour which is to come. So he has used his authority to command me to look to our English coast, threatened by the Duke of Parma. I pray God my Lord-Admiral do not find the lack of the *Rainbow* and her companions, for I protest before God I vowed I would be as near or nearer with my little ship to encounter our enemies as any of the greatest ships in both armies."²

There was no insubordination, however, and Seymour's squadron, at twilight of Tuesday evening, August 9th—according to orders, so that the enemy might not see their departure—bore away for Margate.³ But although Winter and Seymour were much disappointed at their enforced return, there was less enthusiasm among the sailors of the fleet. Pursuing the Spaniards without powder or fire, and without beef and bread to eat, was not thought amusing by the English crews. Howard had not three days' supply of food in his

¹ Winter's Letter, MS.

² Lord H. Seymour to Walsingham,

³ Aug. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Winter's Letter, MS.

lockers, and Seymour and his squadron had not food for one day. Accordingly, when Seymour and Winter took their departure, "they had much ado," so Winter said, "with the staying of many ships that would have returned with them, besides their own company."¹ Had the Spaniards, instead of being panic-struck, but turned on their pursuers, what might have been the result of a conflict with starving and unarmed men?²

Howard, Drake, and Frobisher, with the rest of the fleet, followed the Armada through the North Sea from Tuesday night (9th August) till Friday (the 12th), and still, the strong south-wester swept the Spaniards before them, uncertain whether to seek refuge, food, water, and room to repair damages, in the realms of the treacherous King of Scots, or on the iron-bound coasts of Norway. Medina Sidonia had however quite abandoned his intention of returning to England, and was only anxious for a safe return to Spain. So much did he dread that northern passage, unpiloted, around the grim Hebrides, that he would probably have surrendered, had the English overtaken him and once more offered battle. He was on the point of hanging out a white flag—as they approached him for the last time—but yielded to the expostulations of the ecclesiastics on board the *Saint Martin*, who thought, no doubt, that they had more to fear from England than from the sea, should they be carried captive to that country, and who persuaded him that it would be a sin and a disgrace to surrender before they had been once more attacked.³

On the other hand, the Devonshire skipper, Vice-Admiral Drake, now thoroughly in his element, could not restrain his hilarity, as he saw the Invincible Armada of the man whose beard he had so often singed, rolling through the German

¹ Winter's Letter, MS.

² "Had the English been well furnished with victuals and munition," says Stowe, "they would in the pursuit have brought the Spaniards to their mercy. On the other hand, had the Spaniards but two days longer continued fight, they must have driven

the English to retreat, for want of shot and powder, leaving the Spaniards masters of the field," 719.

³ Meteren, xv. 274, on the authority of certain Dutch fishermen, who had been impressed on board the *San Martin*. Reynd, viii. 147.

Ocean, in full flight from the country which was to have been made, that week, a Spanish province. Unprovided as were his ships, he was for risking another battle, and it is quite possible that the brag countenance might have proved even more successful than Howard thought.

"We have the army of Spain before us," wrote Drake, from the *Revenge*, "and hope with the grace of God to wrestle a pull with him. There never was any thing pleased me better than seeing the enemy flying with a southerly wind to the northward. God grant you have a good eye to the Duke of Parma, for with the grace of God, if we live, I doubt not so to handle the matter with the Duke of Sidonia as he shall wish himself at St. Mary's Port among his orange trees."¹

But Howard decided to wrestle no further pull. Having followed the Spaniards till Friday, 12th of August, as far as the latitude of 56° 17' the Lord Admiral called a council. It was then decided, in order to save English lives and ships, to put into the Frith of Forth for water and provisions, leaving two "pinnaces to dog the fleet until it should be past the Isles of Scotland."² But the next day, as the wind shifted to the north-west, another council decided to take advantage of the change, and bear away for the North Foreland, in order to obtain a supply of powder, shot, and provisions.⁴

Up to this period, the weather, though occasionally threatening, had been moderate. During the week which succeeded the eventful night off Calais, neither the Armada nor the English ships had been much impeded in their manœuvres by storms of heavy seas. But on the following Sunday, 14th of August, there was a change. The wind shifted again to the south-west, and, during the whole of that day and the Monday, blew a tremendous gale.⁵ "Twas a more violent storm,"

¹ Drake to Walsingham, 1588, in Barrow, 304.

² Bor, III. 326.

³ Fenner to Walsingham, 4 Aug.

31 July
10 Aug.

1588. (S. P. Office MS.) Howard to Walsingham, 7 Aug. 1588, in Barrow 306.

⁴ Fenner's Letter, MS. last cited.

⁵ Ibid.

said Howard, "than was ever seen before at this time of the year."¹ The retreating English fleet was scattered, many ships were in peril, "among the ill-favoured sands off Norfolk," but within four or five days all arrived safely in Margate roads.²

Far different was the fate of the Spaniards. Over their Invincible Armada, last seen by the departing English midway between the coasts of Scotland and Denmark, the blackness of night seemed suddenly to descend. A mystery hung for a long time over their fate. Damaged, leaking, without pilots, without a competent commander, the great fleet entered that furious storm, and was whirled along the iron crags of Norway and between the savage rocks of Farøe and the Hebrides. In those regions of tempest the insulted North wreaked its full vengeance on the insolent Spaniards. Disaster after disaster marked their perilous track; gale after gale swept them hither and thither, tossing them on sandbanks or shattering them against granite cliffs. The coasts of Norway, Scotland, Ireland, were strewn with the wrecks of that pompous fleet, which claimed the dominion of the seas; with the bones of those invincible legions which were to have sacked London and made England a Spanish vice-royalty.

Through the remainder of the month of August there was a succession of storms. On the 2nd September a fierce south-wester drove Admiral Oquendo in his galleon, together with one of the great galeasses, two large Venetian ships, the *Ratta* and the *Balanazara*, and thirty-six other vessels, upon the Irish coast, where nearly every soul on board perished, while the few who escaped to the shore—notwithstanding their religious affinity with the inhabitants—were either butchered in cold blood, or sent coupled in halters from village to village, in order to be shipped to England.³ A few ships were driven on the English coast; others went ashore near Rochelle.

Of the four galeasses and four galleys, one of each returned

¹ Howard to Walsingham, $\frac{8}{13}$ Aug. 1586. (S. P. Office MS.)

² *Ibid.*

³ Drake, in Stowe, 750, seq. Barrow, 319. Meteren, xv. 274. Bor, III 326, 327.

to Spain. Of the ninety-one great galleons and hulks, fifty-eight were lost and thirty-three returned.¹ Of the tenders and zabras, seventeen were lost and eighteen returned. Of one hundred and thirty-four vessels, which sailed from Coruña in July, but fifty-three,² great and small, made their escape to Spain, and these were so damaged as to be utterly worthless. The invincible Armada had not only been vanquished but annihilated.

Of the 30,000 men who sailed in the fleet, it is probable that not more than 10,000 ever saw their native land again. Most of the leaders of the expedition lost their lives. Medina Sidonia reached Santander in October, and, as Philip for a moment believed, "with the greater part of the Armada," although the King soon discovered his mistake.³ Recalde, Diego Flores de Valdez, Oquendo, Maldonado, Bobadilla, Manriquez, either perished at sea, or died of exhaustion immediately after their return. Pedro de Valdez, Vasco de Silva, Alonzo de Sayas, Piemontel, Toledo, with many other nobles, were prisoners in England and Holland. There was hardly a distinguished family in Spain not placed in mourning, so that, to relieve the universal gloom, an edict was published, forbidding the wearing of mourning at all. On the other hand, a merchant of Lisbon, not yet reconciled to the Spanish conquest of his country, permitted himself some tokens of hilarity at the defeat of the Armada, and was immediately hanged by express command of Philip. Thus—as men said—one could neither cry nor laugh within the Spanish dominions.⁴

This was the result of the invasion, so many years preparing, and at an expense almost incalculable. In the year 1588 alone, the cost of Philip's armaments for the subjugation of England could not have been less than six millions of ducats,

¹ Meteren and Bor, *ubi sup.*

² *Ibid.* Compare Strada, II. ix. 563, who sets before his readers the "absurd discrepancy" between the English-Dutch and the Spanish accounts of these losses. According to the Spaniards, thirty-three vessels were lost or captured, and 10,000 men

were missing. According to their enemies, only 10,000 men and about sixty ships escaped. Meteren's account, xv. 274, is minute, and seems truthful, and is followed in the text.

³ Philip II. to Parma, 10 Oct. 1588, (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

⁴ Reynd, viii. 148.

and there was at least as large a sum on board the Armada itself, although the Pope refused to pay his promised million.¹ And with all this outlay, and with the sacrifice of so many thousand lives, nothing had been accomplished, and Spain, in a moment, instead of seeming terrible to all the world, had become ridiculous.²

"Beaten and shuffled together from the Lizard to Calais, from Calais driven with squibs from their anchors, and chased out of sight of England about Scotland and Ireland," as the Devonshire skipper expressed himself, it must be confessed that the Spaniards presented a sorry sight. "Their invincible and dreadful navy," said Drake, "with all its great and terrible ostentation, did not in all their sailing about England so much as sink or take one ship, bark, pinnace, or cock-boat of ours, or even burn so much as one sheep-cote on this land."³

Meanwhile Farnese sat chafing under the unjust reproaches heaped upon him, as if he, and not his master, had been responsible for the gigantic blunders of the invasion.⁴

"As for the Prince of Parma," said Drake, "I take him to be as a bear robbed of her whelps."⁵ The Admiral was quite right. Alexander was beside himself with rage. Day after day, he had been repeating to Medina Sidonia and to Philip that his flotilla and transports could scarcely live in any but the smoothest sea, while the supposition that they could serve a warlike purpose he pronounced absolutely ludicrous. He had always counselled the seizing of a place like Flushing, as a basis of operations against England, but had been over-

¹ Philip to Parma, 10 Oct. 1588. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

² The wits of Rome were very severe upon Philip. "S'il y a aucun," said a Pasquil stuck up in that city, "qui sache des nouvelles de l'armée d'Espagne, perdue en mer depuis trois semaines ou environ, et qui puisse apprendre ce qu' elle est devenue, qu' il en vienne a revelation, et s' adresse au palais St. Pierre ou le St. Père lui fera donner son vin." 'L'Etoile,' 263.

³ Drake, in Stowe, before cited.

⁴ "It seems the Duke of Parma is in a great chafe," said Seymour, "to see his ships in durance at Dunkirk, also to find such discomfiture of the Spanish fleet hard by his nose. I can say no more, but God doth show his mighty hand for protecting this little island." Seymour to Walsingham, Aug. $\frac{7}{17}$ 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁵ Drake to Walsingham, $\frac{10}{20}$ Aug 1588, in Barrow, 310.

ruled ; and he had at least reckoned upon the Invincible Armada to clear the way for him, before he should be expected to take the sea.¹

With prodigious energy and at great expense he had constructed or improved internal water-communications from Ghent to Sluys, Newport, and Dunkerk. He had thus transported all his hoys, barges, and munitions for the invasion, from all points of the obedient Netherlands to the sea-coast, without coming within reach of the Hollanders and Zeelanders, who were keeping close watch on the outside. But those Hollanders and Zeelanders, guarding every outlet to the ocean, occupying every hole and cranny of the coast, laughed the invaders of England to scorn, braving them, jeering them, daring them to come forth, while the Walloons and Spaniards shrank before such amphibious assailants, to whom a combat on the water was as natural as upon dry land. Alexander, upon one occasion, transported with rage, selected a band of one thousand musketeers, partly Spanish, partly Irish, and ordered an assault upon those insolent boatmen. With his own hand—so it was related—he struck dead more than one of his own officers who remonstrated against these commands ; and then the attack was made by his thousand musketeers upon the Hollanders, and every man of the thousand was slain.²

He had been reproached for not being ready, for not having embarked his men ; but he had been ready for a month, and his men could be embarked in a single day. “But it was impossible,” he said, “to keep them long packed up on board vessels, so small that there was no room to turn about in : the people would sicken, would rot, would die.”³ So soon as he had received information of the arrival of the fleet before Calais—which was on the 8th August—he had proceeded the

¹ Parma's Letters to Philip, before cited *passim*. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

² Bor, III. 323, 324. Strada, II. ix. 562. Reynd. viii. 147.

³ “Porque los baxeles son tan

pequeños que no hay plaza para revolverse. La gente se enfermaria, pudriera, y perderia.” Parma to Philip, 8 Aug. 1588. (Arch. de Simancas, MS.)

same night to Newport and embarked 16,000 men, and before dawn he was at Dunkerk, where the troops stationed in that port were as rapidly placed on board the transports.¹ Sir William Stanley, with his 700 Irish kernes, were among the first shipped for the enterprise.² Two days long these regiments lay heaped together, like sacks of corn, in the boats—as one of their officers described it³—and they lay cheerfully, hoping that the Dutch fleet would be swept out of the sea by the Invincible Armada, and patiently expecting the signal for setting sail to England. Then came the Prince of Ascoli, who had gone ashore from the Spanish fleet at Calais, accompanied by serjeant-major Gallinato and other messengers from Medina Sidonia, bringing the news of the fire-ships and the dispersion and flight of the Armada.⁴

“God knows,” said Alexander, “the distress in which this event has plunged me, at the very moment when I expected to be sending your Majesty my congratulations on the success of the great undertaking. But these are the works of the Lord, who can recompense your Majesty by giving you many victories, and the fulfilment of your Majesty’s desires, when He thinks the proper time arrived. Meantime let Him be praised for all, and let your Majesty take great care of your health, which is the most important thing of all.”⁵

Evidently the Lord did not think the proper time yet arrived for fulfilling his Majesty’s desires for the subjugation of England, and meanwhile the King might find what comfort he could in pious commonplaces and in attention to his health.

But it is very certain that, of all the high parties concerned, Alexander Farnese was the least reprehensible for the overthrow of Philip’s hopes. No man could have been more judicious—as it has been sufficiently made evident in the course of this narrative—in arranging all the details of the great enterprise, in pointing out all the obstacles, in providing for all emergencies. No man could have been more minutely

¹ Parma to Philip, 10 Aug. 1588.
(Arch. de Sim. MS.)

² Meteren, xv. 273, 274.

³ Strada, II. x. 559, 562.

⁴ Parma to Philip, 10 Aug. MS.
last cited.

⁵ Ibid.

faithful to his master, more treacherous to all the world beside. Energetic, inventive, patient, courageous, and stupendously false, he had covered Flanders with canals and bridges, had constructed flotillas, and equipped a splendid army, as thoroughly as he had puzzled Comptroller Croft. And not only had that diplomatist and his wiser colleagues been hoodwinked, but Elizabeth and Burghley, and, for a moment, even Walsingham, were in the dark, while Henry III. had been his passive victim, and the magnificent Balafré a blind instrument in his hands. Nothing could equal Alexander's fidelity but his perfidy. Nothing could surpass his ability to command but his obedience. And it is very possible that had Philip followed his nephew's large designs, instead of imposing upon him his own most puerile schemes, the result for England, Holland, and, all Christendom might have been very different from the actual one. The blunder against which Farnese had in vain warned his master, was the stolid ignorance in which the King and all his counsellors chose to remain of the Holland and Zeeland fleet. For them Warmond and Nassau, and Van der Does and Joost de Moor, did not exist, and it was precisely these gallant sailors, with their intrepid crews, who held the key to the whole situation.

To the Queen's glorious naval commanders, to the dauntless mariners of England, with their well-handled vessels, their admirable seamanship, their tact and their courage, belonged the joys of the contest, the triumph, and the glorious pursuit ; but to the patient Hollanders and Zeelanders, who, with their hundred vessels, held Farnese, the chief of the great enterprise, at bay, a close prisoner with his whole army in his own ports, daring him to the issue, and ready—to the last plank of their fleet and to the last drop of their blood—to confront both him and the Duke of Medina Sidonia, an equal share of honour is due. The safety of the two free commonwealths of the world in that terrible contest was achieved by the people and the mariners of the two states combined.

Great was the enthusiasm certainly of the English people as the volunteers marched through London to the place of

rendezvous, and tremendous were the cheers when the brave Queen rode on horseback along the lines of Tilbury. Glowing pictures are revealed to us of merry little England, arising in its strength, and dancing forth to encounter the Spaniards, as if to a great holiday. "It was a pleasant sight," says that enthusiastic merchant-tailor John Stowe, "to behold the cheerful countenances, courageous words, and gestures, of the soldiers, as they marched to Tilbury, dancing, leaping wherever they came, as joyful at the news of the foe's approach as if lusty giants were to run a race. And Bellona-like did the Queen infuse a second spirit of loyalty, love, and resolution, into every soldier of her army, who, ravished with their sovereign's sight, prayed heartily that the Spaniards might land quickly, and when they heard they were fled, began to lament."¹

But if the Spaniards had not fled, if there had been no English navy in the Channel, no squibs at Calais, no Dutchmen off Dunkerk, there might have been a different picture to paint. No man who has studied the history of those times, can doubt the universal and enthusiastic determination of the English nation to repel the invaders. Catholics and Protestants felt alike on the great subject. Philip did not flatter himself with assistance from any English Papists, save exiles and renegades like Westmoreland, Paget, Throgmorton, Morgan, Stanley, and the rest. The bulk of the Catholics, who may have constituted half the population of England, although malcontent, were not rebellious; and notwithstanding the precautionary measures taken by government against them, Elizabeth proudly acknowledged their loyalty.²

¹ Stowe, 749.

² "Said it was their intention to occupy the whole kingdom of England—to keep the English Queen a prisoner, but to treat her as a Queen, until the King should otherwise ordain. Said that they had understood that there were many Catholics in England, but that they made not much account of them, knowing that the Queen had taken care that they should not give any assistance, and

believing that most of them would have fought for their native land," &c., &c. Answers of Don Diego de Pimentel to Interrogations before Adrian van der Myle, John van Olden-Barneveld; Admiral Villers, and Famars, in Bor, III. xxiii. 325, 326.

"This invasion, tending to the reducing of this realm to the subjection of a stranger—a matter so greatly disliked generally by the subjects of this realm of all sorts and of all reli-

But loyalty, courage, and enthusiasm, might not have sufficed to supply the want of numbers and discipline. According to the generally accepted statement of contemporary chroniclers, there were some 75,000 men under arms: 20,000 along the southern coast, 23,000 under Leicester, and 33,000 under Lord Chamberlain Hunsdon, for the special defence of the Queen's person.¹

But it would have been very difficult, in the moment of danger, to bring anything like these numbers into the field. A drilled and disciplined army—whether of regulars or of militia-men—had no existence whatever. If the merchant-vessels, which had been joined to the royal fleet, were thought by old naval commanders to be only good to make a show, the volunteers on land were likely to be even less effective than the marine militia, so much more accustomed than they to hard work. Magnificent was the spirit of the great feudal lords as they rallied round their Queen. The Earl of Pembroke offered to serve at the head of three hundred horse and five hundred footmen, armed at his own cost, and all ready to “hazard the blood of their hearts” in defence of her person. “Accept hereof most excellent sovereign,” said the Earl, “from a person desirous to live no longer than he may see your Highness enjoy your blessed estate, maugre the beards of all confederated leaguers.”²

The Earl of Shrewsbury, too, was ready to serve at the head of his retainers, to the last drop of his blood. “Though I be old,” he said, “yet shall your quarrel make me young again. Though lame in body, yet lusty in heart to lend your greatest enemy one blow, and to stand near your defence, every way wherein your Highness shall employ me.”³

But there was perhaps too much of this feudal spirit. The

gtons, yea, by no small number of them that are known to be addicted to the Romish religion—who are resolutely bent to withstand the same with the employment of their goods and hazard of their lives,” &c. Queen to the Commissioners at Bourbourg (signed, but staid by her Majesty's order),

July ¹⁷/₂₁ 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

¹ Camden, III. 405.

² Pembroke to the Queen, ^{28 July}/_{7 Aug.} 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Shrewsbury to the Queen, ⁹/₁₉ Aug 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

lieutenant-general complained bitterly that there was a most mischievous tendency among all the militia-men to escape from the Queen's colours, in order to enrol themselves as retainers to the great lords.¹ This spirit was not favourable to efficient organization of a national army. Even had the commander-in-chief been a man of genius and experience it would have been difficult for him, under such circumstances, to resist a splendid army, once landed, and led by Alexander Farnese, but even Leicester's most determined flatterers hardly ventured to compare him in military ability with that first general of his age. The best soldier in England was unquestionably Sir John Norris, and Sir John was now marshal of the camp to Leicester. The ancient quarrel between the two had been smoothed over, and—as might be expected—the Earl hated Norris more bitterly than before, and was perpetually vituperating him, as he had often done in the Netherlands. Roger Williams, too, was entrusted with the important duties of master of the horse, under the lieutenant-general, and Leicester continued to bear the grudge towards that honest Welshman, which had begun in Holland. These were not promising conditions in a camp, when an invading army was every day expected; nor was the completeness or readiness of the forces sufficient to render harmless the quarrels of the commanders.

The Armada had arrived in Calais roads on Saturday afternoon, the 6th August. If it had been joined on that day, or the next—as Philip and Medina Sidonia fully expected—by the Duke of Parma's flotilla, the invasion would have been made at once. If a Spanish army had ever landed in England at all, that event would have occurred on the 7th August. The weather was not unfavourable, the sea was smooth, and the circumstances under which the catastrophe of the great drama was that night accomplished, were a profound mystery to every soul in England. For aught that Leicester, or Burghley, or Queen Elizabeth, knew at the time, the army of

¹ Leicester to Walsingham, $\frac{24 \text{ July}}{3 \text{ Aug.}}$, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

Farnese might, on Monday, have been marching upon London. Now, on that Monday morning, the army of Lord Hunsdon was not assembled at all, and Leicester, with but four thousand men under his command, was just commencing his camp at Tilbury.¹ The "Bellona-like" appearance of the Queen on her white palfrey, with truncheon in hand, addressing her troops in that magnificent burst of eloquence which has so often been repeated, was not till eleven days afterwards, August $\frac{9}{19}$; ² not till the great Armada, shattered and tempest-tossed, had been, a week long, dashing itself against the cliffs of Norway and the Farœs, on its forlorn retreat to Spain.

Leicester, courageous, self-confident, and sanguine as ever, could not restrain his indignation at the parsimony with which his own impatient spirit had to contend. "Be you assured," said he, *on the 3rd August, when the Armada was off the Isle of Wight*, "if the Spanish fleet arrive safely in the narrow seas, the Duke of Parma will join presently with all his forces, and lose no time in invading this realm. Therefore I beseech you, my good Lords, let no man, by hope or other abuse, prevent your speedy providing defence against this mighty enemy now knocking at our gate."³

For even at this supreme moment doubts were entertained at court as to the intentions of the Spaniards.

Next day he informed Walsingham that his four thousand men had arrived. "They be as forward men and willing to meet the enemy as I ever saw," said he.⁴ He could not say 4 Aug. as much in praise of the commissariat. "Some want 1588. the captains showed," he observed, "for these men arrived without one meal of victuals, so that, on their arrival, they had not

¹ "I have a most apt place to begin our camp in, not far from the fort, at a place called West Tilbury." Leicester to Privy Council, $\frac{24 \text{ July}}{3 \text{ Aug.}}$, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

"I did peruse and make choice of the ground for the encamping of the soldiers. Yesterday went to Chelmsford to order all the soldiers hither

this day." Same to Walsingham, $\frac{26 \text{ July}}{4 \text{ Aug.}}$, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Lingard, viii. 285.

³ Leicester to Privy Council, $\frac{24 \text{ July}}{3 \text{ Aug.}}$, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ Same to Walsingham, $\frac{26 \text{ July}}{4 \text{ Aug.}}$, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

one barrel of beer nor loaf of bread—enough after twenty miles' march to have discouraged them, and brought them to mutiny. I see many causes to increase my former opinion of the dilatory wants you shall find upon all sudden hurley burleys. In no former time was ever so great a cause, and albeit her Majesty hath appointed an army to resist her enemies if they land, yet how hard a matter it will be to gather men together, I find it now. If it will be five days to gather these countrymen, judge what it will be to look in short space for those that dwell forty, fifty, sixty miles off.”¹

He had immense difficulty in feeding even this slender force. “I made proclamation,” said he, “two days ago, in all market towns, that victuallers should come to the camp and receive money for their provisions, but there is not one victualler come in to this hour. I have sent to all the justices of peace about it from place to place. I speak it that timely consideration be had of these things, and that they be not deferred till the worst come. Let her Majesty *not defer the time*, upon any supposed hope, *to assemble a convenient force of horse and foot about her*. Her Majesty cannot be strong enough too soon, and if her navy had not been strong and abroad as it is, what care had herself and her whole realm been in by this time! And what care she will be in if her forces be not only assembled, but an army presently dressed to withstand the mighty enemy that is to approach her gates.”

“God doth know, I speak it not to bring her to charges. I would she had less cause to spend than ever she had, and her coffers fuller than ever they were; but I will prefer her life and safety, and the defence of the realm, before all sparing of charges in the present danger.”²

Thus, on the 5th August, no army had been assembled—not even the body-guard of the Queen—and Leicester, with four thousand men, unprovided with a barrel of beer or a loaf of bread, was about commencing his entrenched camp at

¹ Leicester to Walsingham, $\frac{26 \text{ July}}{5 \text{ Aug.}}$ 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² *Ibid.*

Tilbury. On the 6th August the Armada was in Calais roads, expecting Alexander Farnese to lead his troops upon London!

Norris and Williams, on the news of Medina Sidonia's approach, had rushed to Dover, much to the indignation of Leicester, just as the Earl was beginning his entrenchments at Tilbury. "I assure you I am angry with Sir John Norris and Sir Roger Williams," he said. "I am here cook, caterer, and huntsman. I am left with no one to supply Sir John's place as marshal, but, for a day or two, am willing to work the harder myself. I ordered them both to return this day early, which they faithfully promised. Yet, on arriving this morning, I hear nothing of either, and have nobody to marshal the camp either for horse or foot. This manner of dealing doth much mislike me in them both. I am ill-used. 'Tis now four o'clock, but here's not one of them. If they come not this night, I assure you I will not receive them into office, nor bear such loose careless dealing at their hands. If you saw how weakly I am assisted you would be sorry to think that we here should be the front against the enemy that is so mighty, if he should land here. And seeing her Majesty hath appointed me her lieutenant-general, I look that respect be used towards me, such as is due to my place."¹

Thus the ancient grudge between Leicester and the Earl of Sussex's son was ever breaking forth, and was not likely to prove beneficial at this eventful season.

Next day the Welshman arrived, and Sir John promised to come back in the evening. Sir Roger brought word from the coast that Lord Henry Seymour's fleet was in want both of men and powder. "Good Lord!" exclaimed Leicester, "how is this come to pass, that both he and my Lord-Admiral are so weakened of men. I hear they be running away. I beseech you, assemble your forces, and play not away this kingdom by delays. Hasten our horsemen hither 5 Aug. and footmen. . . . If the Spanish fleet come to 1588.

¹ Leicester to Walsingham, ^{25 July}/_{4 Aug.}, MS. already cited.

the narrow seas the Prince of Parma will play another part than is looked for."¹

As the Armada approached Calais, Leicester was informed that the soldiers at Dover began to leave the coast. It seemed that they were dissatisfied with the penuriousness of the government. "Our soldiers do break away at Dover, or are not pleased. I assure you, without wages, the people will not tarry, and contributions go hard with them. Surely I find that her Majesty must needs deal liberally, and be at charges to entertain her subjects that have chargeably and liberally used themselves to serve her."² The lieutenant-general even thought it might be necessary for him to proceed to Dover in person, in order to remonstrate with these discontented troops; for it was possible that those ill-paid, undisciplined, and very meagre forces, would find much difficulty in opposing Alexander's march to London, if he should once succeed in landing. Leicester had a very indifferent opinion too of the train-bands of the metropolis. "For your Londoners," he said, "I see their *service will be little*, except they have their own captains, and having them, *I look for none at all by them*, when we shall meet the enemy."³ This was not complimentary, certainly, to the training of the famous Artillery Garden, and furnished a still stronger motive for defending the road over which the capital was to be approached. But there was much jealousy, both among citizens and nobles, of any authority entrusted to professional soldiers. "I know what burghers be, well enough," said the Earl, "as brave and well-entertained as ever the Londoners were. If they should go forth from the city they should have good leaders. You know the imperfections of the time, how few leaders you have, and the gentlemen of the counties are very loth to have any captains placed with them. So that the beating out of our best captains is like to be cause of great danger."⁴

Sir John Smith, a soldier of experience, employed to drill and organize some of the levies, expressed still more dis-

¹ Leicester to Walsingham, $\frac{26 \text{ July}}{5 \text{ Aug.}}$
MS. already cited.

² Same to same, $\frac{26 \text{ July}}{7 \text{ Aug.}}$ 1588. (S.
P. Office MS.) ³ Ibid. ⁴ Ibid.

paraging opinions than those of Leicester concerning the probable efficiency in the field of these English armies.¹ The Earl was very angry with the knight, however, and considered him incompetent, insolent, and ridiculous. Sir John seemed, indeed, more disposed to keep himself out of harm's way, than to render service to the Queen by leading awkward recruits against Alexander Farnese. He thought it better to nurse himself.

"You would laugh to see how Sir John Smith has dealt since my coming," said Leicester. "He came to me, and told me that his disease so grew upon him as he must needs go to the baths. I told him I would not be against his health, but he saw what the time was, and what pains he had taken with his countrymen, and that I had provided a good place for him. Next day he came again, saying little to my offer then, and seemed desirous, for his health, to be gone. I told him what place I did appoint, which was a regiment of a great part of his countrymen. He said his health was dear to him, and he desired to take leave of me, which I yielded unto. Yesterday, being our muster-day, he came again to me to dinner; but such foolish and vain-glorious paradoxes he burst withal, without any cause offered, as made all that knew anything smile and answer little, but in sort rather to satisfy men present than to argue with him."²

And the knight went that day to review Leicester's choice troops—the four thousand men of Essex—but was not much more deeply impressed with their proficiency than he had been with that of his own regiment. He became very censorious.

"After the muster," said the lieutenant-general, "he entered again into such strange cries for ordering of men, and for the fight with the weapon, as made me think he was not well. God forbid he should have charge of men that knoweth so little, as I dare pronounce that he doth."³

¹ Hardwicke Papers, I. 575. Strype, iv. 47. Lingard, viii. 273.

² Leicester to Walsingham, $\frac{28 \text{ July}}{7 \text{ Aug.}}$
1588, MS. already cited. ³ Ibid.

Yet the critical knight was a professional campaigner, whose opinions were entitled to respect; and the more so, it would seem, because they did not materially vary from those which Leicester himself was in the habit of expressing. And these interior scenes of discord, tumult, parsimony, want of organization, and unsatisfactory mustering of troops, were occurring on the very Saturday and Sunday when the Armada lay in sight of Dover cliffs, and when the approach of the Spaniards on the Dover road might at any moment be expected.

Leicester's jealous and overbearing temper itself was also proving a formidable obstacle to a wholesome system of defence. He was already displeased with the amount of authority entrusted to Lord Hunsdon, disposed to think his own rights invaded, and desirous that the Lord Chamberlain should accept office under himself. He wished saving clauses as to his own authority inserted in Hunsdon's patent. "Either it must be so, or I shall have wrong," said he, "if he absolutely command where my patent doth give me power. You may easily conceive what absurd dealings are likely to fall out, if you allow two absolute commanders."¹

Looking at these pictures of commander-in-chief, officers, and rank and file—as painted by themselves—we feel an inexpressible satisfaction that in this great crisis of England's destiny, there were such men as Howard, Drake, Frobisher, Hawkins, Seymour, Winter, Fenner, and their gallant brethren, cruising that week in the Channel, and that Nassau and Warmond, De Moor and Van der Does, were blockading the Flemish coast.

There was but little preparation to resist the enemy once landed. There were no fortresses, no regular army, no population trained to any weapon. There were patriotism, loyalty, courage, and enthusiasm, in abundance; but the commander-in-chief was a queen's favourite, odious to the people, with very moderate abilities, and eternally quarrelling with officers more competent than himself; and all the arrangements were

¹ Leicester to Walsingham, MS. already cited.

so hopelessly behind-hand, that although great disasters might have been avenged, they could scarcely have been avoided.

Remembering that the Invincible Armada was lying in Calais roads on the 6th of August, hoping to cross to Dover the next morning, let us ponder the words addressed on that very day to Queen Elizabeth by the Lieutenant-General of England.

“My most dear and gracious Lady,” said the Earl, “it is most true that those enemies that approach your kingdom and person are your undeserved foes, and being so, and hating you for a righteous cause, there is the less fear to be had of their malice or their forces ; for there is a most just God that beholdeth the innocence of that heart. The cause you are assailed for is His and His Church’s, and He never failed any that faithfully do put their chief trust in His goodness. He hath, to comfort you withal, given you great and mighty means to defend yourself, which means I doubt not but your Majesty will timely and princely use them, and your good God that ruleth all will assist you and bless you with victory.”¹

He then proceeded to give his opinion on two points concerning which the Queen had just consulted him—the propriety of assembling her army, and her desire to place herself at the head of it in person.

On the first point one would have thought discussion superfluous on the 6th of August. “For your army, *it is more than time it were gathered and about you,*” said Leicester, “or so near you as you may have the use of it at a few hours’ warning. The reason is that your mighty enemies are at hand, and if God suffers them to pass by your fleet, you are sure they will attempt their purpose of landing with all expedition. And albeit your navy be very strong, but, as we have always heard, the other is not only far greater, but their forces of men much beyond yours. No doubt if the Prince of Parma come forth, their forces by sea shall not only be

¹ Leicester to the Queen, $\frac{27 \text{ July}}{6 \text{ Aug.}}$, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

greatly augmented, but his power to land shall the easier take effect whensoever he shall attempt it. Therefore it is most requisite that your Majesty at all events have as great a force every way as you can devise ; for there is no dalliance at such a time nor with such an enemy. You shall otherwise hazard your own honour, besides your person and country, and must offend your gracious God that gave you these forces and power, *though you will not use them when you should.*"¹

It seems strange enough that such phrases should be necessary when the enemy was knocking at the gate ; but it is only too true that the land-forces were never organized until the hour of danger had, most fortunately and unexpectedly, passed by. Suggestions at this late moment were now given for the defence of the throne, the capital, the kingdom, and the life of the great Queen, which would not have seemed premature had they been made six months before, but which, when offered in August, excite unbounded amazement. Alexander would have had time to march from Dover to Durham before these directions, now leisurely stated with all the air of novelty, could be carried into effect.

"Now for the placing of your army," says the lieutenant-general on the memorable Saturday, 6th of August, "no doubt but I think about London the meetest, and I suppose that others will be of the same mind. And your Majesty should forthwith give the *charge thereof to some special nobleman* about you, and likewise place all your chief officers that every man *may know what he shall do, and gather as many good horse* above all things as you can, and the oldest, best, and assuredest captains to lead ; for therein will consist the greatest hope of good success under God. And so soon as your army is assembled, *let them by and by be exercised, every man to know his weapon*, and that there be all other things prepared in readiness for your army, as if they should march upon a day's warning, especially carriages, and a commissary of victuals, and a master of ordnance."²

Certainly, with Alexander of Parma on his way to London

¹ Leicester to the Queen, MS. last cited.

² Ibid.

at the head of his Italian pikemen, his Spanish musketeers, his famous veteran legion—"that nursing mother of great soldiers"¹—it was indeed more than time that every man should know what he should do, that an army of Englishmen should be assembled, and that every man should know his weapon. "By and by" was easily said, and yet on the 6th of August it was by and by that an army, not yet mustered, not yet officered, not yet provided with a general, a commissary of victuals, or a master of ordinance, was to be exercised—"every man to know his weapon."

English courage might ultimately triumph over the mistakes of those who governed the country, and over those disciplined brigands by whom it was to be invaded. But meantime every man of those invaders had already learned on a hundred battle-fields to know *his* weapon.

It was a magnificent determination on the part of Elizabeth to place herself at the head of her troops; and the enthusiasm which her attitude inspired, when she had at last emancipated herself from the delusions of diplomacy and the seductions of thrift, was some recompense at least for the perils caused by her procrastination. But Leicester could not approve of this hazardous though heroic resolution.²

The danger passed away. The Invincible Armada was

¹ "Aquel tercio viejo, padre de todos los demas, y seminario de los mayores soldados que ha visto en nuestro tiempo Europa." Coloma, ii. 26^{vo}.

² Leicester to the Queen, MS. before cited.

"Now for your person," he said, "being the most dainty and sacred thing we have in this world to care for, a man must tremble when he thinks of it, especially finding your Majesty to have that princely courage to transport yourself to the uttermost confines of your realm to meet your enemies and defend your subjects, I cannot, most dear Queen, consent to that; for upon your well-doing consists all and some for your whole kingdom, and therefore preserve it above all! Yet will I not that, in some sort, so princely and so rare a magnanimity should not appear to your people and the world as it is, and thus far, if it

please you, you may do it to draw yourself to your house at Havering; and your army, being about London, as at Stratford, Eastham, Hackney, and the villages there about, shall be alway not only a defence but a ready supply to those counties of Essex and Kent, if need be, and in the meantime your Majesty may comfort this army and the people of both those counties, and may see both the camp and the forts. It is not above fourteen miles from Havering, and a very convenient place for your Majesty to lie in by the way. To rest you at the camp, I trust you will be pleased with your poor lieutenant's cabin, and within a mile there is a gentleman's house where you may also lie. Thus you may comfort not only these thousands, but many more that shall hear of it, and thus far, but no farther, can I consent to adventure your person."

driven out of the Channel by the courage, the splendid seamanship, and the enthusiasm of English sailors and volunteers. The Duke of Parma was kept a close prisoner by the fleets of Holland and Zeeland; and the great storm of the 14th and 15th of August at last completed the overthrow of the Spaniards.

It was, however, supposed for a long time that they would come back, for the disasters which had befallen them in the north were but tardily known in England. The sailors, by whom England had been thus defended in her utmost need, were dying by hundreds, and even thousands, of ship-fever, in the latter days of August. Men sickened one day, and died the next, so that it seemed probable that the ten thousand sailors by whom the English ships of war were manned, would have almost wholly disappeared, at a moment when their services might be imperatively required. Nor had there been the least precaution taken for cherishing and saving these brave defenders of their country. They rotted in their ships, or died in the streets of the naval ports, because there were no hospitals to receive them.¹

"'Tis a most pitiful sight," said the Lord-Admiral, "to see here at Margate how the men, having no place where they can be received, die in the streets. I am driven of force myself to come on land to see them bestowed in some lodgings; and the best I can get is barns and such outhouses, and the relief is small that I can provide for them here. It would grieve any man's heart to see men that have served so valiantly die so miserably."²

The survivors, too, were greatly discontented; for, after having been eight months at sea, and enduring great privations, they could not get their wages. "Finding it to come thus scantily," said Howard, "it breeds a marvellous alteration among them."³

But more dangerous than the pestilence or the discontent

¹ Lord Howard to the Queen; Same to Walsingham; Same to Privy Council, ^{22 Aug.} _{1 Sept.} (S. P. Office MSS.)

² Howard to Burghley, ¹⁰ ₂₀ Aug. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Howard to Privy Council, ^{22 Aug.} _{1 Sept.} 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

was the misunderstanding which existed at the moment between the leading admirals of the English fleet. Not only was Seymour angry with Howard, but Hawkins and Frobisher were at daggers drawn with Drake; and Sir Martin—if contemporary affidavits can be trusted—did not scruple to heap the most virulent abuse upon Sir Francis, calling him, in language better fitted for the fore-castle than the quarter-deck, a thief and a coward, for appropriating the ransom of Don Pedro Valdez, in which both Frobisher and Hawkins claimed at least an equal share with himself.¹

¹⁰
²⁰ "The ¹⁰th day of August, 1588, I arrived at Harwick," says Matthew Starke, mariner on board the 'Revenge,' flag ship of Sir Francis Drake, "and delivered letters sent by the Lord-Admiral to the Lord Sheffield. . . . I found with him Sir John Hawkins, Sir Martin Frobisher, with divers others. . . . Then Sir Martin Frobisher began some speeches 'concerning the service done in this action, and said:—Sir Francis, Drake reporteth that no man hath done any good service but he, but he shall well understand that others have done as good service as he, and better too. He came bragging up at the first indeed, and gave them his prow and his broad-side, and then kept his luff, and was glad that he was gone again, like a cowardly knave or traitor—I rest doubtful which, but the one I will swear.

"Further, said he, he hath done good service indeed, for he took Don Pedro; for after he had seen her in the evening that she had spent her masts, then, like a coward, he kept by her all night, because he would have the spoil. He thinketh to cozen us of our shares of 15,000 ducats, but we will have our shares, or I will make him spend the best blood in his belly, for he hath done enough of those cozening cheats already.

"He hath used certain speeches of me (continued Sir Martin) which I will make him eat again, or I will make him spend the best blood in his belly. Furthermore, he reporteth that no man hath done so good service as he, but he lieth in his teeth, for

there are others that have done as good, and better too.

"Then he demanded of me if we (in the 'Revenge') did not see Don Pedro overnight or no. Unto which I answered No. Then he told me that I lied, for she was seen to all the fleet. Unto which I answered I would lay my head that not any one man in the fleet did see her until it was morning, that we were within two or three cables' lengths of her. Whereunto he answered, Aye, marry, you were within two or three cables' lengths, for you were no farther off all night, but lay a-hull by her. Whereunto I answered No, for we bear a good sail all night, off and on.

"Then he asked me to what end we stood off from the fleet all night. I answered that we had descried three or four hulks, and to that end we wrought, not knowing what they were. Then said he, Sir Francis was appointed to bear a light all that night, which light we looked for, but there was none to be seen; and in the morning, when we should have dealt with them, there was not about five or six near to the admiral, by reason we saw not his light. After this, and many more speeches which I am not able to remember, the Lord Sheffield demanded of me what I was. Unto which I answered I had been in the action with Sir Francis in the 'Revenge' this seven or eight months. Then he demanded of me, what art thou—a soldier? And I answered I am a mariner, like your Honour. Then said he, I have no more to say unto you. You may depart.'

"All this I do, confess to be true, as

And anxious enough was the Lord-Admiral, with his sailors perishing by pestilence, with many of his ships so weakly manned that—as Lord Henry Seymour declared—there were not mariners enough to weigh the anchors,¹ and with the great naval heroes, on whose efforts the safety of the realm depended, wrangling like fisherwomen among themselves, when rumours came, as they did almost daily, of the return of the Spanish Armada, and of new demonstrations on the part of Farnese. He was naturally unwilling that the fruits of English valour on the seas should now be sacrificed by the false economy of the government. He felt that, after all that had been endured and accomplished, the Queen and her counsellors were still capable of leaving England at the mercy of a renewed attempt. “I know not what you think at the court,” said he; “but I think, and so do all here, that there cannot be too great forces maintained for the next five or six weeks. God knoweth whether the Spanish fleet will not, after refreshing themselves in Norway, Denmark, and the Orkneys, return. I think they dare not go back to Spain with this dishonour to their King and overthrow of the Pope’s credit. Sir, sure bind, sure find. A kingdom is a grand wager. Security is dangerous, and, *if God had not been our best friend*, we should have found it so.”²

Nothing could be more replete with sound common sense than this simple advice, given as it was in utter ignorance of the fate of the Armada, after it had been lost sight of by the English vessels off the Frith of Forth, and of the cold refresh-

It was spoken by Sir Martin Frobisher, and do acknowledge it in the presence of these parties whose names are here-under written. Captain Platt: Captain Vaughan; Mr. Grange, master of the Arke; John Graye, master of the Revenge; Captain Spendeloe.

“Moreover, he said that Sir Francis was the cause of all these troubles, and in this action he showed himself the most coward. By me, Matthew Starke, Aug. $\frac{10}{20}$ 1588.” (S. P. Office MS.)

¹ Seymour to Walsingham, $\frac{23}{2}$ Aug. 2 Sept.

1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Howard to Walsingham, $\frac{8}{18}$ Aug.

1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

“Some haply may say that winter cometh on apace,” said Drake, “but my poor opinion is that I dare not advise her Majesty to hazard a kingdom with the saving of a little charge. The Duke of Parma is nigh, and will not let to send daily to the Duke of Sidonia, if he may find him.” Drake to Walsingham, $\frac{8}{18}$ Aug. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

ment which it had found in Norway and the Orkneys. But Burghley had a store of pithy apophthegms, for which he knew he could always find sympathy in the Queen's breast, and with which he could answer these demands of admirals and generals. "To spend in time convenient is wisdom ;" he observed—"to continue charges without needful cause bringeth repentance ;"—"to hold on charges without knowledge of the certainty thereof and of means how to support them, is lack of wisdom ;"¹ and so on.

Yet the Spanish fleet might have returned into the Channel—for aught the Lord-Treasurer on the 22nd August knew—or the Dutch fleet might have relaxed in its vigilant watching of Farnese's movements. It might have then seemed a most plentiful lack of wisdom to allow English sailors to die of plague in the streets for want of hospitals, and to grow mutinous for default of pay. To have saved under such circumstances would perhaps have brought repentance.

The invasion of England by Spain had been most portentous. That the danger was at last averted is to be ascribed to the enthusiasm of the English nation—both patricians and plebeians—to the heroism of the little English fleet, to the spirit of the naval commanders and volunteers, to the stanch and effective support of the Hollanders, and to the hand of God shattering the Armada at last ; but very little credit can be conscientiously awarded to the diplomatic or the military efforts of the Queen's government.² Miracles alone, in the

¹ Memorial in Burghley's hand,

² Aug. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ An exception is always to be made in favour of the Secretary of State. Although stunned for a moment by the superhuman perfidy of Philip and Farnese, and deceived by false intelligence as to the conditions of the Armada after the gale near Coruña, Walsingham had been ever watchful, and constantly uttering words of solemn warning. "Plain dealing is best among friends," said Seymour. "I will not flatter you, but you have fought more with your pen than many here in our

English navy with their enemies. But that your place and most necessary attendance about her Majesty cannot be spared, your value and deserts opposite the enemy had showed itself."

"For myself," added the bold sailor, who was much dissatisfied at the prospect of "being penned and moored in roads," instead of cruising after the Spaniards, "I have not spared my body, which, I thank God, is able to go through thick and thin. . . . Spare me not while I am abroad, for when God shall return me, I will be kin to the bear. I will hold to the stake before I come abroad again." Lord

opinion of Roger Williams, had saved England on this occasion from perdition.¹

Towards the end of August, Admiral de Nassau paid a visit to Dover with forty ships, "well appointed and furnished."² He dined and conferred with Seymour, Palmer, and other officers—Winter being still laid up with his wound—and expressed the opinion that Medina Sidonia would hardly return to the Channel, after the banquet he had received from her Majesty's navy between Calais and Gravelines. He also gave the information that the States had sent fifty Dutch vessels in pursuit of the Spaniards, and had compelled all the herring-fishermen for the time to serve in the ships of war, although the prosperity of the country depended on that industry. "I find the man very wise, subtle, and cunning," said Seymour of the Dutch Admiral, "and therefore do I trust him."³

Nassau represented the Duke of Parma as evidently discouraged, as having already disembarked his troops, and as very little disposed to hazard any further enterprise against England. "I have left twenty-five Kromstevens," said he, "to prevent his egress from Sluys, and I am immediately returning thither myself. The tide will not allow his vessels at present to leave Dunkerk, and I shall not fail—before the next full moon—to place myself before that place, to prevent their coming out, or to have a brush with them if they venture to put to sea."⁴

But after the scenes on which the last full moon had looked down in those waters, there could be no further pretence on the part of Farnese to issue from Sluys and Dunkerk, and

H. Seymour to Walsingham, from the Rainbow, ¹⁸/₂₈ Aug. 1588. (S. P. Office

MS.) Same to same, ²³/₂ Aug. MS.

¹ R. Williams to Walsingham, July, 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

² Seymour to Walsingham, ¹⁷/₂₇ Aug. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

³ Seymour to Walsingham, ¹⁴/₂₆ Aug.

1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ "Cependant je ne faudrai de me retourner contre la prochaine lune devant Dunquerque pour empêcher la sortie a ceux dedans, ou de me mêler avec eux s'ils se delibèrent se mettre en mer." Just de Nassau to Walsingham, ¹⁷/₂₇ Aug. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

England and Holland were thenceforth saved from all naval enterprises on the part of Spain.

Meantime, the same uncertainty which prevailed in England as to the condition and the intentions of the Armada was still more remarkable elsewhere. There was a systematic deception practised not only upon other governments, but upon the King of Spain as well. Philip, as he sat at his writing-desk, was regarding himself as the monarch of England, long after his Armada had been hopelessly dispersed.¹

In Paris, rumours were circulated during the first ten days of August that England was vanquished, and that the Queen was already on her way to Rome as a prisoner, where she was to make expiation, barefoot, before his Holiness. Mendoza—now more magnificent than ever—stalked into Notre Dame with his drawn sword in his hand, crying out with a loud voice, “Victory, victory!”² and on the 10th of August ordered bonfires to be made before his house; but afterwards thought better of that scheme.³ He had been deceived by a variety of reports sent to him day after day by agents on the coast; and the King of France—better informed by Stafford, but not unwilling thus to feed his spite against the insolent ambassador—affected to believe his fables. He even confirmed them by intelligence, which he pretended to have himself received from other sources, of the landing of the Spaniards in England without opposition, and of the entire subjugation of that country without the striking of a blow.⁴

Hereupon, on the night of August 10th, the envoy—“like a wise man,” as Stafford observed⁵—sent off four couriers, one after another, with the great news to Spain, that his master’s heart might be rejoiced, and caused a pamphlet on the subject to be printed and distributed over Paris.⁶ “I will not waste a large sheet of paper to express the joy which we must all feel,” he wrote to Idiaquez, “at this good news. God be

¹ Philip II. to Parma, 18 Aug. 1588. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

² Stowe, 744-750.

³ Sir E. Stafford to Walsingham,

⁴ Aug. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁵ Reyd, viii. 148.

⁶ Stafford to Walsingham, MS. last cited.

⁷ Ibid. Reyd, *ubi sup.*

praised for all, who gives us small chastisements to make us better, and then, like a merciful Father, sends us infinite rewards."¹ And in the same strain he wrote, day after day, to Moura and Idiaquez, and to Philip himself.

Stafford, on his side, was anxious to be informed by his government of the exact truth, whatever it were, in order that these figments of Mendoza might be contradicted. "That which cometh from me," he said, "will be believed, for I have not been used to tell lies, and in very truth I have not the face to do it."²

And the news of the Calais squibs, of the fight off Gravelines, and the retreat of the Armada towards the north, could not be very long concealed. So soon, therefore, as authentic intelligence reached the English envoy of those events—which was not however for *nearly ten days* after their occurrence³—Stafford in his turn wrote a pamphlet, in answer to that of Mendoza, and decidedly the more successful one of the two. It cost him but five crowns, he said, to print four hundred copies of it; but those in whose name it was published got one hundred crowns by its sale. The English ambassador was unwilling to be known as the author—although "desirous of touching up the impudence of the Spaniard;"—but the King had no doubt of its origin. Poor Henry, still smarting under the insults of Mendoza and 'Mucio,' was delighted with this blow to Philip's presumption, was loud in his praises of Queen Elizabeth's valour, prudence, and marvellous fortune, and declared that what she had just done could be compared to the greatest exploits of the most illustrious men in history.⁴

¹ "No quiero ocupar V. M. con larga carta el Regozijo que tendra con las buenas nuevas con que queria despachar. Dios sea alavado por todo, qui nos muestra chicos castigos por enmendarnos, y da como padre de misericordia infinitos mercedes y beneficios." Mendoza to Idiaquez, 13 Aug. 1588. (Arch. de Sim. [Paris.] MS.) Same to Philip II. same date.

The envoy thought that the "Almighty Father of mercy had conferred as infinite rewards and benefits," upon

His Spanish children, the sacking of London, and the butchering of the English nation—rewards and benefits similar to those which they had formerly enjoyed in the Netherlands.

² Stafford to Walsingham, $\frac{1}{11}$ Aug. MS. before cited.

³ Same to same, $\frac{9}{19}$ Aug. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

⁴ "Este Rey ha loado, hablandose con algunos de sus favoritos grande

"So soon as ever he saw the pamphlet," said Stafford, "he offered to lay a wager it was my doing, and laughed at it heartily."¹ And there were malicious pages about the French court, who also found much amusement in writing to the ambassador, begging his interest with the Duke of Parma that they might obtain from that conqueror some odd refuse town or so in England, such as York, Canterbury, London, or the like—till the luckless Don Bernardino was ashamed to show his face.²

A letter from Farnese, however, of 10th August, apprized Philip before the end of August of the Calais disaster, and caused him great uneasiness, without driving him to despair. "At the very moment," wrote the King to Medina Sidonia, "when I was expecting news of the effect hoped for from my Armada, I have learned the retreat from before Calais, *to which it was compelled by the weather*; [!] and I have received a very great shock, which keeps me in anxiety not to be exaggerated. Nevertheless I hope in our Lord that he will have provided a remedy, and that if it was possible for you to return upon the enemy, to come back to the appointed post, and to watch an opportunity for the great stroke, you will have done as the case required; and so I am expecting, with solicitude, to hear what has happened, and please God it may be what which is so suitable for his service."³

mente del valor, animo, y prudencia de la Reyna de Inglaterra, favorecida de una maravillosa fortuna, diciendo que lo que ella avia hecho ultimamente se podia comparar con las mayores hazañas de los hombres mas ilustres del tiempo pasado, pues avia osado con solas sus fuerzas aguardar las que eran tan pujantes como las de España y combatir las, cerrando juntamente el paso a la armada del duca de Parma, que era no menos poderosa, y aver tardado quatro años V. Mag^d. con juntar semejantes armadas, poniendo al mundo en admiracion de ser las de las quales se podia dezir aver trionfado la Reyna de Inglaterra." Mendoza to Philip, 13 Oct. 1588. (Arch. de Sim. [Paris.] MS.)

Of course all the exploits of the

English and Dutch admirals and their crews were, in the opinion of Henry III., the work of Queen Elizabeth. It was the royal prudence, valor, and good fortune, which saved England, not the merits of Drake and Howard, Nassau and De Moor.

¹ Stafford to Walsingham, MS. before cited.

² Stowe, 744-750.

³ "Al tiempo que se aguardavan nuevas del effeto que de las fuerzas dessa armada se esperaba, se ha entendido la derrota que desde sobre Calais la forço a tomar el temporal, y recibido muy gran sobresalto que me tiene con mas cuydado que se puede encarecer, aunque espero en nuestro Señor que avra proveído de remedio, y que os fue posible revolver sobre el enemigo y

And in the same strain, melancholy yet hopeful, were other letters despatched on that day to the Duke of Parma. "The satisfaction caused by your advices on the 8th August of the arrival of the Armada near Calais, and of your preparations to embark your troops, was changed into a sentiment which you can imagine, by your letter of the 10th. The anxiety thus occasioned it would be impossible to exaggerate, although—the cause being such as it is—there is no ground for distrust. Perhaps the Armada, keeping together, has returned upon the enemy, and given a good account of itself, with the help of the Lord. So I still promise myself that you will have performed your part in the enterprise in such wise as that the service intended to the Lord may have been executed, and repairs made to the reputation of all, which has been so much compromised."¹

And the King's drooping spirits were revived by fresh accounts which reached him in September, by way of France. He now learned that the Armada had taken captive four Dutch men-of-war and many English ships; that, after the Spaniards had been followed from Calais roads by the enemy's fleet, there had been an action, which the English had attempted in vain to avoid, off Newcastle; that Medina Sidonia had charged upon them so vigorously as to sink twenty of their ships, and to capture twenty-six others, good and sound; that the others, to escape perdition, had fled, after suffering great damage, and had then gone to pieces, all hands perishing; that the Armada had taken a port in Scotland, where it was very comfortably established; that the

acudir al puesto señalado, y atender el efecto principal lo pidiere como pedia el caso, y así aguardo con deseo aviso de lo sucedido, que plega a Dios sea lo que tanto conviene a su servicio." Philip II. to Medina Sidonia, 31 Aug. 1588. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

¹ "Prometo me de vos que avreys executado lo que os toca de manera que se consiga al servicio que se ha pretendido hazer a Dios, y el reparo de la reputacion de todos que esta tan empeñada." The underlined words

were stricken out by Philip, from the draft of the letter—prepared as usual by the secretary—with the note in the King's hand: "See if it be well to omit the passage erased, because in that which God does, or by which He is served, there is no gaining or losing of reputation, and it is better not to speak of it at all." ("Pues en lo que Dios haze, y es servido, no ay que perder ni ganar reputacion, y es mayor se hablar en ello.") Philip II. to Parma, 31 Aug. 1588. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

flag-ship of Lord-admiral Howard, of Drake, and of that "distinguished mariner Hawkins," had all been sunk in action, and that no soul had been saved except Drake, who had escaped in a cock-boat. "This is good news," added the writer, "and it is most certain."¹

The King pondered seriously over these conflicting accounts, and remained very much in the dark. Half the month of September went by, and he had heard nothing official since the news of the Calais catastrophe. It may be easily understood that Medina Sidonia, while flying round the Orkneys had not much opportunity for despatching couriers to Spain, and as Farnese had not written since the 10th August, Philip was quite at a loss whether to consider himself triumphant or defeated. From the reports by way of Calais, Dunkerk, and Rouen, he supposed that the Armada had inflicted much damage on the enemy. He suggested accordingly, on the 3rd September, to the Duke of Parma, that he might now make the passage to England, while the English fleet, if anything was left of it, was repairing its damages. "'Twill be easy enough to conquer the country," said Philip, "so soon as you set foot on the soil. Then perhaps our Armada can come back and station itself in the Thames to support you."²

Nothing could be simpler. Nevertheless the King felt a pang of doubt lest affairs, after all, might not be going on so swimmingly; so he dipped his pen in the inkstand again, and observed with much pathos, "But if this hope must be given up, you must take the Isle of Walcheren: something must be done to console me."³

And on the 15th September he was still no wiser. "This business of the Armada leaves me no repose," he said; "I can think of nothing else. I don't content myself with what I have written, but write again and again, although in great want of light. I hear that the Armada has sunk and captured many English ships, and is refitting in a Scotch port. If this

¹ Avisos de Dunquerque, 30 Aug. 1588. Carta de Roan de Juan de Gamarra, 31 Aug. 1588. "A sido buena nueva, y esto es certissimo."

(Arch. de Sim. [Paria.] MSS.)

² Philip II. to Parma, 3 Sept. 1588

(Arch. de Sim. MS.)

³ Ibid.

is in the territory of Lord Huntley, I hope he will stir up the Catholics of that country.”¹

And so, in letter after letter, Philip clung to the delusion that Alexander could yet cross to England, and that the Armada might sail up the Thames. The Duke was directed to make immediate arrangements to that effect with Medina Sidonia, at the very moment when that tempest-tossed grandee was painfully creeping back towards the Bay of Biscay, with what remained of his invincible fleet.

Sanguine and pertinacious, the King refused to believe in the downfall of his long-cherished scheme; and even when the light was at last dawning upon him, he was like a child crying for a fresh toy, when the one which had long amused him had been broken. If the Armada were really very much damaged, it was easy enough, he thought, for the Duke of Parma to make him a new one, while the old one was repairing. “In case the Armada is too much shattered to come out,” said Philip, “and winter compels it to stay in that port, *you must cause another Armada to be constructed at Emden* and the adjacent towns, at my expense, and, with the two together, you will certainly be able to conquer England.”²

And he wrote to Medina Sidonia in similar terms. That naval commander was instructed to enter the Thames at once, if strong enough. If not, he was to winter in the Scotch port which he was supposed to have captured. Meantime Farnese would build a new fleet at Emden, and in the spring the two dukes would proceed to accomplish the great purpose.³

But at last the arrival of Medina Sidonia at Santander⁴ dispelled these visions, and now the King appeared in another attitude. A messenger, coming post-haste from the captain-general, arrived in the early days of October at the Escorial. Entering the palace he found Idiaquez and Moura pacing up and down the corridor, before the door of Philip’s cabinet,

¹ Philip II. to Parma, 15 Sept. 1588.
(Arch. de Sim. MS.)

² Ibid.

³ Philip II. to Medina Sidonia,

15 Sept. 1588. (Arch. de Sim. MS.)

⁴ Philip II. to Parma, 10 Oct. 1588
(Arch. de Sim. MS.)

and was immediately interrogated by those counsellors, most anxious, of course, to receive authentic intelligence at last as to the fate of the Armada.¹ The entire overthrow of the great project was now, for the first time, fully revealed in Spain; the fabulous victories over the English, and the annihilation of Howard and all his ships, were dispersed in air. Broken, ruined, forlorn, the invincible Armada—so far as it still existed—had reached a Spanish port. Great was the consternation of Idiaquez and Moura, as they listened to the tale, and very desirous was each of the two secretaries that the other should discharge the unwelcome duty of communicating the fatal intelligence to the King.²

At last Moura consented to undertake the task, and entering the cabinet, he found Philip seated at his desk. Of course he was writing letters.³ Being informed of the arrival of a messenger from the north, he laid down his pen, and inquired the news. The secretary replied that the accounts concerning the Armada were by no means so favourable as could be wished. The courier was then introduced, and made his dismal report. The King did not change countenance. "Great thanks," he observed, "do I render to Almighty God, by whose generous hand I am gifted with such power, that I could easily, if I chose, place another fleet upon the seas. Nor is it of very great importance that a running stream should be sometimes intercepted, so long as the fountain from which it flows remains inexhaustible."

So saying he resumed his pen, and serenely proceeded with his letters.⁴ Christopher Moura stared with unaffected amazement at his sovereign, thus tranquil while a shattered world was falling on his head, and then retired to confer with his colleague.

"And how did his Majesty receive the blow?" asked Idiaquez.

"His Majesty thinks nothing of the blow," answered Moura,

¹ Strada, II. ix. 564.

² Ibid.

³ "Regem literas scribentem reperiit." (Ibid.)

⁴ Ibid. "His dictis calamum resumpsit, et eadem qua ceperat tranquillitate vultus ad scribendum rediit."

"nor do I, consequently, make more of this great calamity than does his Majesty."¹

So the King—as fortune flew away from him, wrapped himself in his virtue; and his counsellors, imitating their sovereign, arrayed themselves in the same garment. Thus draped, they were all prepared to bide the pelting of the storm which was only beating figuratively on their heads, while it had been dashing the King's mighty galleons on the rocks, and drowning by thousands the wretched victims of his ambition. Soon afterwards, when the particulars of the great disaster were thoroughly known, Philip ordered a letter to be addressed in his name to all the bishops of Spain, ordering a solemn thanksgiving to the Almighty for the safety of that portion of the invincible Armada which it had pleased Him to preserve.²

And thus, with the sound of mourning throughout Spain—for there was scarce a household of which some beloved member had not perished in the great catastrophe—and with the peals of merry bells over all England and Holland, and with a solemn 'Te Deum' resounding in every church, the curtain fell upon the great tragedy of the Armada.

¹ "Rex, inquit, totum hoc infortunium nihili facit, nec ego plaris quam ipse." (Ibid.)

² Strada, II. ix. 565. Herrera, III. iii. 113.

CHAPTER XX.

Alexander besieges Bergen-op-Zoom—Pallavicini's Attempt to seduce Parma—Alexander's Fury—He is forced to raise the Siege of Bergen—Gertruydenberg betrayed to Parma—Indignation of the States—Exploits of Schenk—His Attack on Nymegen—He is defeated and drowned—English-Dutch Expedition to Spain—Its meagre Results—Death of Guise and of the Queen-Mother—Combinations after the Murder of Henry III.—Tandem fit Surculus Arbor.

THE fever of the past two years was followed by comparative languor. The deadly crisis was past, the freedom of Europe was saved, Holland and England breathed again ; but tension now gave place to exhaustion. The events in the remainder of the year 1588, with those of 1589—although important in themselves—were the immediate results of that history which has been so minutely detailed in these volumes, and can be indicated in a very few pages.

The Duke of Parma, melancholy, disappointed, angry—stung to the soul by calumnies as stupid as they were venomous, and already afflicted with a painful and lingering disease, which his friends attributed to poison administered by command of the master whom he had so faithfully served—determined, if possible, to afford the consolation which that master was so plaintively demanding at his hands.

So Alexander led the splendid army which had been packed in, and unpacked from, the flat boats of Newport and Dunkerk, against Bergen-op-Zoom, and besieged that city in form. Once of great commercial importance, although somewhat fallen away from its original prosperity, Bergen was well situate on a little stream which connected it with the tide-waters of the Scheldt, and was the only place in Brabant, except Willemstad, still remaining to the States. Opposite lay the Isle of Tholen from which it was easily to be supplied and rein-

forced. The Vosmeer, a branch of the Scheldt, separated the island from the main, and there was a path along the bed of that estuary, which, at dead low-water, was practicable for wading. Alexander, accordingly, sent a party of eight hundred pikemen, under Montigny, Marquis of Renty, and Ottavio Mansfeld, supported on the dyke by three thousand musketeers, across the dangerous ford, at ebb-tide, in order to seize this important island. It was an adventure similar to those, which, in the days of the grand commander, and under the guidance of Mondragon, had been on two occasions so brilliantly successful. But the Isle of Tholen was now defended by Count Solms and a garrison of fierce amphibious Zeelanders—of those determined bands which had just been holding Farnese and his fleet in prison, and daring him to the issue—and the invading party, after fortunately accomplishing their night-journey along the bottom of the Vosmeer, were unable to effect a landing, were driven with considerable loss into the waves again, and compelled to find their way back as best they could, along their dangerous path, and with a rapidly rising tide. It was a blind and desperate venture, and the Vosmeer soon swallowed four hundred of the Spaniards. The rest, half-drowned or smothered, succeeded in reaching the shore—the chiefs of the expedition, Renty and Mansfeld, having been with difficulty rescued by their followers, when nearly sinking in the tide.¹

The Duke continued the siege, but the place was well defended by an English and Dutch garrison, to the number of five thousand, and commanded by Colonel Morgan, that bold and much experienced Welshman, so well known in the Netherland wars. Willoughby and Maurice of Nassau, and Olden-Barneveld were, at different times, within the walls; for the Duke had been unable to invest the place so closely as to prevent all communications from without; and, while Maurice was present, there were almost daily sorties from the town, with many a spirited skirmish, to give pleasure to the martial

¹ Bor. III. xxv. 338-341. Parma to Philip II., 1 Oct. 1588. (Arch. de Sim. MS.) Herrera, III. ii. 114, *seq.*

young Prince.¹ The English officers, Vere and Baskerville, and two Netherland colonels, the brothers Bax, 10 Oct. most distinguished themselves on these occasions. 1588. The siege was not going on with the good fortune which had usually attended the Spanish leaguer of Dutch cities, while, on the 29th September, a personal incident came to increase Alexander's dissatisfaction and melancholy.

On that day the Duke was sitting in his tent, brooding, as he was apt to do, over the unjust accusations which had been heaped upon him in regard to the failure of the Armada, when a stranger was announced. His name, he said, was Giacomo Morone, and he was the bearer of a letter from Sir Horace Pallavicini, a Genoese gentleman long established in London, and known to be on confidential terms with the English government. Alexander took the letter, and glancing at the bottom of the last page, saw that it was not signed.

"How dare you bring me a dispatch without a signature?" he exclaimed. The messenger, who was himself a Genoese, assured the Duke that the letter was most certainly written by Pallavicini—who had himself placed it, sealed, in his hands—and that he had supposed it signed, although he had of course, not seen the inside.

Alexander began to read the note, which was not a very long one, and his brow instantly darkened. He read a line or two more, when, with an exclamation of fury, he drew his dagger, and, seizing the astonished Genoese by the throat, was about to strike him dead. Suddenly mastering his rage, however, by a strong effort, and remembering that the man might be a useful witness, he flung Morone from him.

"If I had Pallavicini here," he said, "I would treat him as I have just refrained from using you. And if I had any suspicion that you were aware of the contents of this letter, I would send you this instant to be hanged."²

The unlucky despatch-bearer protested his innocence of all

¹ Bor, *ubi sup.*

² "Y como fué viendo la desvergüenza y vellaqueria me altero de manera que me levante de donde estaba con resolucion de darle. esto. cadaa, y Dios me alumbró con ponerme

complicity with Pallavicini, and his ignorance of the tenor of the communication by which the Duke's wrath had been so much excited. He was then searched and cross-examined most carefully by Richardot and other counsellors, and—his innocence being made apparent—he was ultimately discharged.

The letter of Pallavicini was simply an attempt to sound Farnese as to his sentiments in regard to a secret scheme, which could afterwards be arranged in form, and according to which he was to assume the sovereignty of the Netherlands himself, to the exclusion of his King, to guarantee to England the possession of the cautionary towns, until her advances to the States should be refunded, and to receive the support and perpetual alliance of the Queen in his new and rebellious position.¹

Here was additional evidence, if any were wanting, of the universal belief in his disloyalty ; and Alexander, faithful, if man ever were to his master—was cut to the heart, and irritated almost to madness, by such insolent propositions. There is neither proof nor probability that the Queen's government was implicated in this intrigue of Pallavicini, who appears to have been inspired by the ambition of achieving a bit of Machiavellian policy quite on his own account. Nothing came of the proposition, and the Duke, having transmitted to the King a minute narrative of the affair, together with indignant protestations of the fidelity which all the world seemed determined to dispute, received most affectionate replies from that monarch, breathing nothing but unbounded confidence in his nephew's innocence and devotion.²

delante que convenia que este hombre se guardase a buen recado, porque V. M. pueda entender del lo que para este nego reporte me; y le dije que si yo tuviesse al Palavicino se la daria cual el merece, y a vos si supiese que sabeis este nego, os mandaria luego colgar. Acabé de leer la carta, y quanto mas la vi y consideré la hallé mas vellaca y enconsonada." Parma to Philip II. 29 Sept. 1588. (Arch. de

Sim. MSS.) Compare Strada, II. 1. lii. 573, *seq.*

¹ Parma to Philip, MS. last cited. Orazio Pallavicini to Giacomo Morone, 31 Aug. 1588. (Arch. de Sim. MSS.) Strada, *ubi sup.*

² Parma to Idiaquez, 1 Oct. 1588. Philip to Parma, 17 Oct. 1588. Idiaquez to Parma, 17 Oct. 1588. (Arch. de Sim. MSS.)

Such assurances from any other man in the world might have disarmed suspicion, but Alexander knew his master too well to repose upon his word, and remembered too bitterly the last hours of Don John of Austria—whose dying pillow he had soothed, and whose death had been hastened, as he knew, either by actual poison or by the hardly less fatal venom of slander—to regain tranquillity as to his own position.

The King was desirous that Pallavicini should be invited over to Flanders, in order that Alexander, under pretence of listening to his propositions, might draw from the Genoese all the particulars of his scheme, and then, at leisure, inflict the punishment which he had deserved.¹ But insuperable obstacles presented themselves, nor was Alexander desirous of affording still further pretexts for his slanderers.

Very soon after this incident—most important as showing the real situation of various parties, although without any immediate result—Alexander received a visit in his tent from another stranger. This time the visitor was an Englishman, one Lieutenant Grimstone, and the object of his interview with the Duke was not political, but had a direct reference to the siege of Bergen. He was accompanied by a countryman of his own, Redhead by name, a camp-suttler by profession. The two represented themselves as deserters from the besieged city, and offered, for a handsome reward, to conduct a force of Spaniards, by a secret path, into one of the gates. The Duke questioned them narrowly, and being satisfied with their intelligence and coolness, caused them to take an oath on the Evangelists, that they were not playing him false. He then selected a band of one hundred musketeers, partly Spaniards, partly Walloons—to be followed at
20 Oct. a distance by a much more considerable force,
1588. two thousand in number, under Sancho de Leyva and the Marquis of Renti—and appointed the following night for an enterprise against the city, under the guidance of Grimstone.

It was a wild autumnal night, moonless, pitch-dark, with a

¹ Idiaquez to Parma, MS. last cited.

storm of wind and rain. The waters were out—for the dykes had been cut in all directions by the defenders of the city—and, with exception of some elevated points occupied by Parma's forces, the whole country was overflowed. Before the party set forth on their daring expedition, the two Englishmen were tightly bound with cords, and led, each, by two soldiers instructed to put them to instant death if their conduct should give cause for suspicion. But both Grimstone and Redhead preserved a cheerful countenance, and inspired a strong confidence in their honest intention to betray their countrymen. And thus the band of bold adventurers plunged at once into the darkness, and soon found themselves contending with the tempest, and wading breast high in the black waters of the Scheldt.

After a long and perilous struggle, they at length reached the appointed gate. The external portcullis was raised, and the fifteen foremost of the band rushed into the town. At the next moment, Lord Willoughby, who had been privy to the whole scheme, cut with his own hand the cords which held the portcullis, and entrapped the leaders of the expedition, who were all at once put to the sword, while their followers were thundering at the gate. The lieutenant and suttler, who had thus overreached that great master of dissimulation, Alexander Farnese, were at the same time unbound by their comrades, and rescued from the fate intended for them.

Notwithstanding the probability—when the portcullis fell—that the whole party had been deceived by an artifice of war, the adventurers, who had come so far, refused to abandon the enterprise, and continued an impatient battery upon the gate. At last it was swung wide open, and a furious onslaught was made by the garrison upon the Spaniards. There was a fierce, brief struggle, and then the assailants were utterly routed. Some were killed under the walls, while the rest were hunted into the waves. Nearly every one of the expedition (a thousand in number) perished.¹

¹ Parma to Philip II. 30 Oct. 1588. | 275^{vo}. Bor, III. xxv. 340. Herrera, (Arch. de Sim. MS.) Meteren, xv. | III. ii. 118, *seq.* Strada, II. x. 582, 585.

It had now become obvious to the Duke that his siege must be raised. The days were gone when the walls of Dutch towns seemed to melt before the first scornful glance of the Spanish invader, and when a summons meant a surrender, and a surrender a massacre. Now, strong in the feeling of independence, and supported by the courage and endurance of their English allies, the Hollanders had learned to humble the pride of Spain as it had never been humbled before. The hero of a hundred battle-fields, the inventive and brilliant conqueror of Antwerp, seemed in the deplorable issue of the English invasion to have lost all his genius, all his fortune. A cloud had fallen upon his fame, and he now saw himself, at the head of the best army in Europe, compelled to retire, defeated and humiliated, from the walls of Bergen. Winter was coming on apace; the country was flooded; the storms in that bleak region and inclement season were incessant; and he was obliged to retreat before his army should be drowned.

On the night of 12-13 November he set fire to his camp, and took his departure. By daybreak he was descried in full retreat, and was hotly pursued by the English and Dutch from the city, who drove the great Alexander and his legions before them in ignominious flight. Lord Willoughby, in full view of the retiring enemy, indulged the allied forces with a chivalrous spectacle. Calling a halt, after it had become obviously useless, with their small force of cavalry, to follow any

Camero, *Guerras de Flandes* (Bruseles, 1625), p. 231, 232. Coloma, *Guerras de los Estados Baxos*, I. 10, 11. Sir W. Drury to Burghley, ²⁰/₃₀ Oct. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

"Seemeth to my simple opinion a great commendation unto the gentleman that could so sweetly charm so wise and learned a master in his own art as the Duke of Parma is," &c.

The Jesuit Strada, however—who narrates all the trickeries of Philip and of Farnese with so much applause—is shocked at the duplicity of Lieutenant Grimstone; and Coloma is ineffably

disgusted at such sharp practice.

It has been stated by Meteren (xv. 275^{vo}) and others, that Sir William Stanley was in this expedition, and that he very narrowly escaped being taken with the first fifteen. This would have been probable enough, had he been there, for his valour was equal to his treachery. But Parma does not mention his name in the letters describing the adventure, and it is therefore unlikely that he was present. At any rate he escaped capture, and, with it, a traitor's death. Strada says expressly, "*Stanlaeo ad id operis nequaquam adhibito.*"

longer, through a flooded country, an enemy who had abandoned his design, he solemnly conferred the honour of knight-hood, in the name of Queen Elizabeth, on the officers who had most distinguished themselves during the siege, Francis Vere, Baskerville, Powell, Parker, Knowles, and on the two Netherland brothers, Paul and Marcellus Bax.¹

The Duke of Parma then went into winter quarters in Brabant, and, before the spring, that obedient Province had been eaten as bare as Flanders had already been by the friendly Spaniards.

An excellent understanding between England and Holland had been the result of their united and splendid exertions against the Invincible Armada. Late in the year 1588 Sir John Norris had been sent by the Queen to offer her congratulations and earnest thanks to the States for their valuable assistance in preserving her throne, and to solicit their cooperation in some new designs against the common foe.² Unfortunately, however, the epoch of good feeling was but of brief duration. Bitterness and dissension seemed the inevitable conditions of the English-Dutch alliance. It will be remembered, that, on the departure of Leicester, several cities had refused to acknowledge the authority of Count Maurice and the States; and that civil war in the scarcely-born commonwealth had been the result. Medenblik, Naarden, and the other contumacious cities, had however been reduced to obedience after the reception of the Earl's resignation, but the important city of Gertruydenberg had remained in a chronic state of mutiny. This rebellion had been partially appeased during the year 1588 by the efforts of Willoughby, who had strengthened the garrison by reinforcements of English troops under command

of his brother-in-law, Sir John Wingfield. Early in 1589 however, the whole garrison became rebellious, disarmed and maltreated the burghers, and demanded immediate payment of the heavy arrearages still due to the troops. Wil-

¹ Bor, *ubi sup.* Meteren. Compare Coloma, I. 11, 12. Herrera, *ubi sup.* Strada, x. 588.

² Propositions of Sir John Norris to

Council of State. Bor, III. xxv. 361, 362. Sir Ed. Norris to —, 29 Oct. 5 Nov. 1588. (S. P. Office MS.)

loughby, who—much disgusted with his career in the Netherlands—was about leaving for England, complaining that the States had not only left him without remuneration for his services, but had not repaid his own advances, nor even given him a complimentary dinner, tried in vain to pacify them. A rumour became very current, moreover, that the garrison had opened negotiations with Alexander Farnese, and accordingly Maurice of Nassau—of whose patrimonial property the city of Gertruydenberg made a considerable proportion, to the amount of eight thousand pounds sterling a year¹—after summoning the garrison, in his own name and that of the States, to surrender, laid siege to the place in form. It would have been cheaper, no doubt, to pay the demands of the garrison in full, and allow them to depart. But Maurice considered his honour at stake. His letters of summons, in which he spoke of the rebellious commandant and his garrison as self-seeking foreigners and mercenaries, were taken in very ill part. Wingfield resented the statement in very insolent language, and offered to prove its falsehood with his sword against any man and in any place whatever. Willoughby wrote to his brother-in-law, from Flushing, when about to embark, disapproving of his conduct and of his language; and to Maurice, deprecating hostile measures against a city under the protection of Queen Elizabeth. At any rate, he claimed that Sir John Wingfield and his wife, the Countess of Kent, with their newly-born child, should be allowed to depart from the place. But Wingfield expressed great scorn at any suggestion of retreat, and vowed that he would rather surrender the city to the Spaniards than tolerate the presumption of Maurice and the States. The young Prince accordingly opened his batteries, but before an entrance could be effected into the town, was obliged to retire at the approach of Count Mansfeld with a much superior force. Gertruydenberg was now surrendered to the Spaniards (10 April, 1589)^{1589.} in accordance with a secret negotiation which had been proceeding all the spring, and had been brought to a conclu-

¹ Ortel to Wolley, 9 April, 1589. (S. P. Office MS.)

sion at last. The garrison received twelve months' pay in full and a gratuity of five months in addition, and the city was then reduced into obedience to Spain and Rome on the terms which had been usual during the government of Farnese.¹

The loss of this city was most severe to the republic, for the enemy had thus gained an entrance into the very heart of Holland. It was a more important acquisition to Alexander than even Bergen-op-Zoom would have been, and it was a bitter reflection that to the treachery of Netherlanders and of their English allies this great disaster was owing. All the wrath aroused a year before by the famous treason of York and Stanley, and which had been successfully extinguished, now flamed forth afresh. The States published a placard denouncing the men who had thus betrayed the cause of freedom, and surrendered the city of Gertruydenberg to the Spaniards, as perjured traitors whom it was made lawful to hang, whenever or wherever caught, without trial or sentence, and offering fifty florins a-head for every private soldier and one hundred florins for any officer of the garrison. A list of these Englishmen and Netherlanders, so far as known, was appended to the placard, and the catalogue was headed by the name of Sir John Wingfield.²

Thus the consequences of the fatal event were even more deplorable than the loss of the city itself. The fury of Olden-Barneveld at the treason was excessive, and the great Advocate governed the policy of the republic, at this period, almost like a dictator.³ The States, easily acknowledging the sway

¹ Bor, III. xxvi. 403-419. Strada, II. x. 600-609. Coloma, I. 20-23.

² Bor, *ubi sup.* Bodley to Burghley,

¹⁰ April, 1589. (B. Mus. Galba, D. iv. 144, MS.)

³ "For all here is directed by Holland, and Holland is carried away by Barneveld, whose resolutions are so full of self-will, and so opposite to her Majesty's proceedings, as there are of the wisest among themselves that fear by his dealing some great

alteration. For the hindrance of which, I cannot propose any better means than if that course which is held between him and Ortell might be stopped in England. For matters here are so handled at this present, as in whatsoever cause the States-General, or they of Holland and Zealand, have to deal with her Majesty, they neither propose it before to the council of state, nor impart it with her Majesty's lieutenant or counsellors; but, by Barneveld's direction.

of the imperious orator, became bitter and wrathful with the English, side by side with whom they had lately been so cordially standing.

Willoughby, on his part, now at the English court, was furious with the States, and persuaded the leading counsellors of the Queen as well as her Majesty herself, to adopt his view of the transaction. Wingfield, it was asserted, was quite innocent in the matter; he was entirely ignorant of the French language, and therefore was unable to read a word of the letters addressed to him by Maurice and the replies which had been signed by himself. Whether this strange excuse ought to be accepted or not, it is quite certain that he was no traitor like York and Stanley, and no friend to Spain; for he had stipulated for himself the right to return to England, and had neither received nor desired any reward. He hated Maurice and he hated the States, but he asserted that he had been held in durance, that the garrison was mutinous, and that he was no more responsible for the loss of the city than Sir Francis Vere had been, who had also been present, and whose name had been subsequently withdrawn, in honourable fashion from the list of traitors, by authority of the States. His position—so far as he was personally concerned—seemed defensible, and the Queen was thoroughly convinced of his innocence. Willoughby complained that the republic was utterly in the hands of Barneveld, that no man ventured to lift his voice or his eyes in presence of the terrible Advocate who ruled every Netherlander with a rod of iron, and that his violent and threatening language to Wingfield and himself at the dinner-table in Bergen-op-Zoom on the subject of the mutiny (when one hundred of the Gertruydenberg garrison were within sound of his voice) had been the chief cause of the rebellion.¹ Inspired by these remonstrances, the Queen once more emptied the vials of her wrath upon the United

solicit all by Ortell, and so receive their despatch. Whereunto the reputation of every action doth redound unto him, and her Majesty's lieutenant and ministers are little regarded."

Bodley to Burghley, ^{20 Feb.}_{2 March} 1582
(Br. Mus. Galba, D. iv. 55, MS.)
¹ Bor, *ubi sup.*

Netherlands. The criminations and recriminations seemed endless, and it was most fortunate that Spain had been weakened, that Alexander, a prey to melancholy and to lingering disease, had gone to the baths of Spa to recruit his shattered health, and that his attention and the schemes of Philip for the year 1589 and the following period were to be directed towards France. Otherwise the commonwealth could hardly have escaped still more severe disasters than those already experienced in this unfortunate condition of its affairs, and this almost hopeless misunderstanding with its most important and vigorous friend.¹

While these events had been occurring in the heart of the republic, Martin Schenk, that restless freebooter, had been pursuing a bustling and most lucrative career on its outskirts. All the episcopate of Cologne—that debatable land of the two rival paupers, Bavarian Ernest and Gebhard Truchsess—trembled before him. Mothers scared their children into quiet with the terrible name of Schenk, and farmers and land-youngers throughout the electorate and the land of Berg, Cleves, and Juliers, paid their black-mail, as if it were a constitutional impost, to escape the levying process of the redoubtable partisan.

But Martin was no longer seconded, as he should have been, by the States, to whom he had been ever faithful since he forsook the banner of Spain for their own ; and he had

¹ Bor, *ubi sup.* and 443-457.

Willoughby published a very bitter pamphlet in reply to the severe attacks of Olden-Barneveld and his partisans. "The child of Milord Willoughby is born at last," said Joachim Ortel; "the book is printed, and is as full of lies as an egg is of meat" (so vol leugens als een ey vol suyvels).

Walsingham—as might be supposed—much regretted these misunderstandings, although he was inclined to censure the States. "I like very well," he said, "that the placard should rather be answered by Lord Willoughby than by her Majesty. But to have it not answered at all were the best. . . . Their ingratitude is great, yet seeing we cannot

sever ourselves from them without infinite danger, their errors are to be winked at for a time. It may be that the disgrace inflicted on them through the loss of Gertruydenberg will somewhat humble them; for seeing Barneveld, the principal ringleader amongst them, begins to stick sail, I think the rest will stoop. But when I look into their strange course in publishing their placard, after the loss of the town to hazard the loss of her Majesty's favour, I must conclude that with the loss of the town they have lost their wits." Walsingham to Burghley, ^{27 April} 1589. (Br. Mus. ^{9 May} Galba, D. iv. 171, MS.)

even gone to England and complained to the Queen of the short-comings of those who owed him so much. His ingenious and daring exploit—the capture of Bonn—has already been narrated, but the States had neglected the proper precautions to secure that important city. It had consequently, after a six months' siege, been surrendered to the Spaniards under Prince Chimay, on the 19th of September;¹ while, in December following, the city of Wachtendonk, between the Rhine and Meuse, had fallen into Mansfeld's hands.² Rheinberg, the only city of the episcopate which remained to the deposed Truchsess, was soon afterwards invested by the troops of Parma, and Schenk in vain summoned the States-General to take proper measures for its defence. But with the enemy now eating his way towards the heart of Holland, and with so many dangers threatening them on every side, it was thought imprudent to go so far away to seek the enemy. So Gebhard retired in despair into Germany, and Martin did what he could to protect Rheinberg, and to fill his own coffers at the expense of the whole country side.

He had built a fort, which then and long afterwards bore his name—Schenken Schans, or Schenk's Sconce—at that important point where the Rhine, opening its two arms to enclose the “good meadow” island of Batavia, becomes on the left the Waal, while on the right it retains its ancient name; and here, on the outermost edge of the republic, and looking straight from his fastness into the fruitful fields of Munster, Westphalia, and the electorate, the industrious Martin devoted himself with advantage to his favourite pursuits.

On the 7th of August, on the heath of Lippe, he had attacked a body of Spanish musketeers, more than a thousand

¹ Strada, X. 584-595. Coloma, I. 12-14. Bor, III. xxv. 328.

² Strada, X. 599, who states that bomb-shells—which he elaborately describes, were first used at this siege of Wachtendonk. They had been invented, he says, a few days before its

commencement, by an artizan of Venlo, for his own misfortune and that of his city; for he set the town of Venlo on fire, and burned down two-thirds of it, by a premature explosion of his new projectiles.

strong, who were protecting a convoy of provisions, treasure, and furniture, sent by Farnese to Verdugo, royal governor of Friesland. Schenk, without the loss of a single man, had put the greater part of these Spaniards and Walloons to the sword, and routed the rest. The leader of the expedition, Colonel Aristotle Patton, who had once played him so foul a trick in the surrender of Gelder, had soon taken to flight, when he found his ancient enemy upon him, and, dashing into the Lippe, had succeeded, by the strength and speed of his horse, in gaining the opposite bank, and effecting his escape. Had he waited many minutes longer it is probable that the treacherous Aristotle would have passed a comfortless half-hour with his former comrade. Treasure to the amount of seven thousand crowns in gold, five hundred horses, with jewels, plate, and other articles of value, were the fruit of this adventure, and Schenk returned with his followers, highly delighted, to Schenkenschans,¹ and sent the captured Spanish colours to her Majesty of England as a token.²

A few miles below his fortress was Nymegen, and towards that ancient and wealthy city Schenk had often cast longing eyes. It still held for the King, although on the very confines of Batavia; but while acknowledging the supremacy of Philip, it claimed the privileges of the empire. From earliest times it had held its head very high among imperial towns, had been one of the three chief residences of the Emperor Charlemagne, and still paid the annual tribute of a glove full of pepper to the German empire.³

On the evening of the 10th of August, 1589, there was a wedding-feast in one of the splendid mansions of the stately city. The festivities were prolonged until deep in the mid-summer's night, and harp and viol were still inspiring the feet of the dancers, when on a sudden, in the midst of the holiday-groups, appeared the grim visage of Martin Schenk, the man

¹ Strada, X. 630, 631. Coloma, II. 26-27. Bor, III. xxvi. 459. Bodley to Walsingham, ²/₁₂ Aug. 1589. (Br. Mus. Galba, D. v. p. 60. MS.)

² Bodley to Burghley, ²⁰/₂₀ Aug. 1589 (Br. Mus. Galba, D. iv. p. 55, MS.)
³ Guicciardini, *in voce*.

who never smiled. Clad in no wedding-garment, but in armour of proof, with morion on head, and sword in hand, the great freebooter strode heavily through the ball-room, followed by a party of those terrible musketeers who never gave or asked for quarter, while the affrighted revellers fluttered away before them.

Taking advantage of a dark night, he had just dropped down the river from his castle, with five-and-twenty barges, had landed with his most trusted soldiers in the foremost vessels, had battered down the gate of St. Anthony, and surprised and slain the guard. Without waiting for the rest of his boats, he had then stolen with his comrades through the silent streets, and torn away the lattice-work, and other slight defences on the rear of the house which they had now entered, and through which they intended to possess themselves of the market-place. Martin had long since selected this mansion as a proper position for his enterprise, but he had not been bidden to the wedding, and was somewhat disconcerted when he found himself on the festive scene which he had so grimly interrupted. Some of the merry-makers escaped from the house, and proceeded to alarm the town; while Schenk hastily fortified his position, and took possession of the square. But the burghers and garrison were soon on foot, and he was driven back into the house. Three times he recovered the square by main strength of his own arm, seconded by the handful of men whom he had brought with him, and three times he was beaten back by overwhelming numbers into the wedding mansion. The arrival of the greater part of his followers, with whose assistance he could easily have mastered the city in the first moments of surprise, was mysteriously delayed. He could not account for their prolonged absence, and was meanwhile supported only by those who had arrived with him in the foremost barges.

The truth—of which he was ignorant—was, that the remainder of the flotilla, borne along by the strong and deep current of the Waal, then in a state of freshet, had shot past the landing-place, and had ever since been vainly struggling

against wind and tide to force their way back to the necessary point. Meantime Schenk and his followers fought desperately in the market-place, and desperately in the house which he had seized. But a whole garrison, and a town full of citizens in arms proved too much for him, and he was now hotly besieged in the mansion, and at last driven forth into the streets.

By this time day was dawning, the whole population, soldiers and burghers, men, women, and children, were thronging about the little band of marauders, and assailing them with every weapon and every missile to be found. Schenk fought with his usual ferocity, but at last the musketeers, in spite of his indignant commands, began rapidly to retreat towards the quay. In vain Martin stormed and cursed, in vain with his own hand he struck more than one of his soldiers dead.¹ He was swept along with the panic-stricken band, and when, shouting and gnashing his teeth with frenzy, he reached the quay at last, he saw at a glance why his great enterprise had failed. The few empty barges of his own party were moored at the steps; the rest were half a mile off, contending hopelessly against the swollen and rapid Waal. Schenk, desperately wounded, was left almost alone upon the wharf, for his routed followers had plunged helter skelter into the boats, several of which, overladen in the panic, sank at once, leaving the soldiers to drown or struggle with the waves. The game was lost. Nothing was left the freebooter but retreat. Reluctantly turning his back on his enemies, now in full cry close behind him, Schenk sprang into the last remaining boat just pushing from the quay. Already overladen, it foundered with his additional weight, and Martin Schenk, encumbered with his heavy armour, sank at once to the bottom of the Waal.²

Some of the fugitives succeeded in swimming down the

¹ Schencius ira furens et frendens
..... suorum nonnullis sua manu
interemptis," &c. Strada, X. 632.

² Bor, III. xxvi. 459-460. Wage-
naar, viii. 307, 308. Strada, X. 631-

633. Coloma, II. 27. Bodley to Wal-
singham, $\frac{3}{13}$ Aug. 1589. (S. P. Office
MS.) Bentivoglio, II. v. 335. Harad
Tum. Belg. III. 425.

stream, and were picked up by their comrades in the barges below the town, and so made their escape. Many were drowned with their captain. A few days afterwards, the inhabitants of Nymegen fished up the body of the famous partisan. He was easily recognized by his armour, and by his truculent face, still wearing the scowl with which he had last rebuked his followers. His head was taken off at once, and placed on one of the turrets of the town, and his body, divided in four, was made to adorn other portions of the battlements; so that the burghers were enabled to feast their eyes on the remnants of the man at whose name the whole country had so often trembled.

This was the end of Sir Martin Schenk of Niddegem, knight, colonel, and brigand; save that ultimately his dis-severed limbs were packed in a chest, and kept in a church-tower, until Maurice of Nassau, in course of time becoming master of Nymegen, honoured the valiant and on the whole faithful freebooter with a Christian and military burial.¹

A few months later (October, 1589) another man who had been playing an important part in the Netherlands' drama lost his life. Count Moeurs and Niewenaar, stadholder of Utrecht, Gelderland, and Overysse, while inspecting some newly-invented fireworks, was suddenly killed by their accidental ignition and explosion.² His death left vacant three great stadholderates, which before long were to be conferred upon a youth whose power henceforth was rapidly to grow greater.

The misunderstanding between Holland and England continuing, Olden-Barneveld, Aerssens, and Buys, refusing to see that they had done wrong in denouncing the Dutch and English traitors who had sold Gertruydenberg to the enemy, and the Queen and her counsellors persisting in their anger

¹ Bor, Wagenaar, Strada, *ubi sup.*

"The townsmen since have fished for Schenk, and found him in his armour, and since have cut him in quarters and set him on their gates; which extraordinary inhumanity doth so exasperate the States as they will

publish an edict upon it, that no quarter shall be kept with Nymegen."

Bodley to Walsingham, ⁹/₁₉ Aug. 1589

(S. P. Office MS.)

² Bor, III. xxvi. 480.

at so insolent a proceeding, it may easily be supposed that there was no great heartiness in the joint expedition against Spain, which had been projected in the autumn of 1588, and was accomplished in the spring and summer of 1589.

Nor was this well-known enterprise fruitful of any remarkable result. It had been decided to carry the war into Spain itself, and Don Antonio, prior of Crato, bastard of Portugal, and pretender to its crown, had persuaded himself and the English government that his name would be potent to conjure with in that kingdom, hardly yet content with the Spanish yoke. Supported by a determined force of English and Dutch adventurers, he boasted that he should excite a revolution by the magic of his presence, and cause Philip's throne to tremble, in return for the audacious enterprise of that monarch against England.

If a foray were to be made into Spain, no general and no admiral could be found in the world so competent to the adventure as Sir John Norris and Sir Francis Drake. They were accompanied, too, by Sir Edward Norris, and another of those 'chickens of Mars,' Henry Norris; by the indomitable and ubiquitous Welshman, Roger Williams, and by the young Earl of Essex, whom the Queen in vain commanded to remain at home, and who, somewhat to the annoyance of the leaders of the expedition, concealed himself from her Majesty's pursuit, and at last embarked in a vessel which he had equipped, in order not to be cheated of his share in the hazard and the booty. "If I speed well," said the spendthrift but valiant youth, "I will adventure to be rich; if not, I will never live to see the end of my poverty."¹

But no great riches were to be gathered in the expedition. With some fourteen thousand men, and one hundred and sixty vessels—of which six were the Queen's ships of war, including the famous *Revenge* and the *Dreadnought*, and the rest armed merchantmen, English, and forty Hollanders—and with a contingent of fifteen hundred Dutchmen under

¹ Essex to the Vice-Chamberlain, March, 1589, in Barrow's *Life of Drake*, 377.

Nicolas van Meetkerke and Van Laen, the adventurers set sail from Plymouth on the 18th of April, 1589.
1589.

They landed at Coruña—at which place they certainly could not expect to create a Portuguese revolution, which was the first object of the expedition—destroyed some shipping in the harbour, captured and sacked the lower town, and were repulsed in the upper ; marched with six thousand men to Burgos, crossed the bridge at push of pike, and routed ten thousand Spaniards under Andrada and Altamira—Edward Norris receiving a desperate blow on the head at the passage of the bridge, and being rescued from death by his brother John—took sail for the south after this action, in which they had killed a thousand Spaniards, and had lost but two men of their own ; were joined off Cape Finisterre by Essex ; landed a force at Peniche, the castle of which place surrendered to them, and acknowledged the authority of Don Antonio ; and thence marched with the main body of the troops, under Sir John Norris, forty-eight miles to Lisbon, while Drake, with the fleet, was to sail up the Tagus.

Nothing like a revolution had been effected in Portugal. No one seemed to care for the Pretender, or even to be aware that he had ever existed, except the governor of Peniche Castle, a few ragged and bare-footed peasants, who, once upon the road, shouted “Viva Don Antonio,” and one old gentleman by the way side, who brought him a plate of plums. His hopes of a crown faded rapidly, and when the army reached Lisbon it had dwindled to not much more than four thousand effective men—the rest being dead of dysentery, or on the sick-list from imprudence in eating and drinking—while they found that they had made an unfortunate omission in their machinery for assailing the capital, having not a single field-piece in the whole army. Moreover, as Drake was prevented by bad weather and head-winds from sailing up the Tagus, it seemed a difficult matter to carry the city. A few cannon, and the co-operation of the fleet, were hardly to be dispensed with on such an occasion. Nevertheless it would perhaps

have proved an easier task than it appeared—for so great was the panic within the place that a large number of the inhabitants had fled, the Cardinal Viceroy Archduke Albert had but a very insufficient guard, and there were many gentlemen of high station who were anxious to further the entrance of the English, and who were afterwards hanged or garotted for their hostile sentiments to the Spanish government.¹

While the leaders were deliberating what course to take, they were informed that Count Fuentes and Henriquez de Guzman, with six thousand men, lay at a distance of two miles from Lisbon, and that they had been proclaiming by sound of trumpet that the English had been signally defeated before Lisbon, and that they were in full retreat.

Fired at this bravado, Norris sent a trumpet to Fuentes and Guzman, with a letter signed and sealed, giving them the lie in plainest terms, appointing the next day for a meeting of the two forces, and assuring them that when the next encounter should take place, it should be seen whether a Spaniard or an Englishman would be first to fly; while Essex, on his part, sent a note, defying either or both those boastful generals to single combat. Next day the English army took the field, but the Spaniards retired before them; and nothing came of this exchange of cartels, save a threat on the part of Fuentes to hang the trumpeter who had brought the messages. From the execution of this menace he refrained, however, on being assured that the deed would be avenged by the death of the Spanish prisoner of highest rank then in English hands, and thus the trumpeter escaped.

Soon afterwards the fleet set sail from the Tagus, landed, and burned Vigo on their way homeward, and returned to Plymouth about the middle of July.

Of the thirteen thousand came home six thousand, the rest having perished of dysentery and other disorders. They had braved and insulted Spain, humbled her generals, defied her power, burned some defenceless villages, frightened the peasantry, set fire to some shipping, destroyed wine, oil, and other

¹ Bor, III. xxvi. 439.

merchandize, and had divided among the survivors of the expedition, after landing in England, five shillings a head prize-money; but they had not effected a revolution in Portugal. Don Antonio had been offered nothing by his faithful subjects but a dish of plums—so that he retired into obscurity from that time forward—and all this was scarcely a magnificent result for the death of six or seven thousand good English and Dutch soldiers, and the outlay of considerable treasure.

As a freebooting foray—and it was nothing else—it could hardly be thought successful; although it was a splendid triumph compared with the result of the long and loudly heralded Invincible Armada.¹

In France, great events during the remainder of 1588 and the following year, and which are well known even to the most superficial student of history, had much changed the aspect of European affairs. It was fortunate for the two com-

¹ For particulars of this expedition, see Camden, IV. 429-433. Stowe, 751-756. Barrow's 'Life of Drake,' with the letters of Drake, Norris, and others, 335-379. Bor, III. xxvi. 430-443. Herrera, III. v. 170, *seq.*

Sir Roger Williams to the Lord Chancellor, Lord Treasurer, and Secretary Walsingham, July, 1589: (S. P. Office MS.)—

"Had we gone to Lisbon," says the Welsh knight, "and not touched at the Groyne, we had found the town unprovided with men of war; in such sort, with the favour of God, we had carried it away without blows We have returned the most of our ships into England that *should have been* laden with rich merchandise and great treasure. With that lading, our sovereign and your honours might have returned our shipping unto us with a new supply. In going into the Groyne, we lost a number of brave men in dislodging. At the least 2000 took their course—some for England, some for France. There we took our sickness, partly by the hot winds, but chiefly by the old clothes and baggage of those which returned with

the Duke of Medina out of England. There we lost many a day, in the which time the enemy arrived, and placed his forces where he thought most necessarist, chiefly in Lisbon. Notwithstanding, when we arrived, we gave the law in the field, that none durst fight with us, in twelve days, with 5000 footmen, and, God knows, poor people, save 2000, and those all volunteers. All the horsemen we had amounted not to 45; we had not any Portuguese to speak of, and such as we had did us more hurt than good. . . . Some will say, How could you have kept Lisbon? Believe it not. With six thousand we would have kept it against all Spain and Portugal. . . . Our journey was most honourable and profitable unto our sovereign and estate. First, and principally, the world will speak how 5000 Englishmen dared the Spaniards to battle at the gates of Lisbon—not stealing, but after giving leave to arm two months; for the world must think they knew where we meant to direct our course, when Don Antonio dislodged from his house at London," &c. &c.

monwealths of Holland and England, engaged in the great struggle for civil and religious liberty, and national independence, that the attention of Philip became more and more absorbed—as time wore on—with the affairs of France. It seemed necessary for him firmly to establish his dominion in that country before attempting once more the conquest of England, or the recovery of the Netherlands. For France had been brought more nearly to anarchy and utter decomposition than ever. Henry III., after his fatal forgiveness of the deadly offence of Guise, felt day by day more keenly that he had transferred his sceptre—such as it was—to that dangerous intriguer. Bitterly did the King regret having refused the prompt offer of Alphonse Corse on the day of the barricades ; for now, so long as the new generalissimo should live, the luckless Henry felt himself a superfluity in his own realm. The halcyon days were for ever past, when, protected by the swords of Joyeuse and of Epernon, the monarch of France could pass his life playing at cup and ball, or snipping images out of pasteboard, or teaching his parrots to talk, or his lap-dogs to dance. His royal occupations were gone, and murder now became a necessary preliminary to any future tranquillity or enjoyment. Discrowned as he felt himself already, he knew that life or liberty was only held by him now at the will of Guise. The assassination of the Duke in December was the necessary result of the barricades in May ; and accordingly that assassination was arranged with an artistic precision of which the world had hardly suspected the Valois to be capable, and which Philip himself might have envied.

The story of the murders of Blois—the destruction of Guise and his brother the Cardinal, and the subsequent imprisonment of the Archbishop of Lyons, the Cardinal Bourbon, and the Prince de Joinville, now, through the death of his father, become the young Duke of Guise—all these events are too familiar in the realms of history, song, romance, and painting, to require more than this slight allusion here.

Never had an assassination been more technically successful; yet its results were not commensurate with the monarch's hopes. The deed which he had thought premature in May was already too late in December. His mother denounced his cruelty now, as she had, six months before, execrated his cowardice. And the old Queen, seeing that her game was played out—that the cards had all gone against her—that her son was doomed, and her own influence dissolved in air, felt that there was nothing left for her but to die. In a week she was dead, and men spoke no more of Catharine de' Medici, and thought no more of her than if—in the words of a splenetic contemporary—"she had been a dead she-goat."¹ Paris howled with rage when it learned the murders of Blois, and the sixteen quarters became more furious than ever against the Valois. Some wild talk there was of democracy and republicanism after the manner of Switzerland, and of dividing France into cantons—and there was an earnest desire on the part of every grandee, every general, every soldier of fortune, to carve out a portion of French territory with his sword, and to appropriate it for himself and his heirs. Disintegration was making rapid progress, and the epoch of the last Valois seemed more dark and barbarous than the times of the degenerate Carlovingians had been. The letter-writer of the Escorial, who had earnestly warned his faithful Mucio,² week after week, that dangers were impending over him, and that "some trick would be played upon him," should he venture into the royal presence, now acquiesced in his assassination, and placidly busied himself with fresh combinations and newer tools.

Baffled, hunted, scorned by all beside, the luckless Henry now threw himself into the arms of the Béarnese—the man who could and would have protected him long before, had the King been capable of understanding their relative positions

¹ 'L'Etoile.'

² A. 56. 148. Arch. de Simancas, [at Paris.] MS. *passim*.

E. g., "Con Mucio a quien siempre aconsejad que mire por si y no se

dexe engañar y hazer alguna burla, pues anda a tanto peligro." And, in the King's own hand, "Y se acuerde de su padre." Philip to Mendoza, 3 Sept. 1588, MS.

and his own true interests. Could the Valois have conceived the thought of religious toleration, his throne even then might have been safe. But he preferred playing the game of the priests and bigots, who execrated his name and were bent upon his destruction. At last, at Plessis les Tours, the Béarnese, in his shabby old chamois jacket and his well-dinted cuirass took the silken Henry in his arms, and the two—the hero and the fribble—swearing eternal friendship, proceeded

2 Aug., to besiege Paris. A few weeks later, the dagger of
1589.

Jacques Clément put an end for ever to the line of Valois.¹ Luckless Henry III. slept with his forefathers, and Henry of Bourbon and Navarre proclaimed himself King of France. Catharine and her four sons had all past away at last, and it would be a daring and a dexterous schemer who should now tear the crown, for which he had so long and so patiently waited, from the iron grasp of the Béarnese. Philip had a more difficult game than ever to play in France. It would be hard for him to make valid the claims of the Infanta and any husband he might select for her to the crown of her grandfather Henry II. It seemed simple enough for him, while waiting the course of events, to set up a royal effigy before the world in the shape of an effete old Cardinal Bourbon, to pour oil upon its head and to baptize it Charles X.; but meantime the other Bourbon was no effigy, and he called himself Henry IV.

It was easy enough for Paris, and Madam League, and Philip the Prudent, to cry wo upon the heretic; but the cheerful

¹ The spelling of the sixteenth century, in all European languages, was capricious and unsettled; yet the little note in which the Duchess Mary of Luxemburg announced the death of Henry III. is a curiosity, even for that age;—

“Qui la ette tue—sa ette par un Jacobin qui luy a donne dun cou de pissetolle dan la taye. Ill i a dotre nouvelle beaucoup avantajeuse pour les bon Catolique. jay donne charge a se deporteur de les vous dire.” Duchess Maria de Luxembourg au Commandeur Moreo, 9 Aug. 1589.

(Archivo de Simancas, MS.)

Philip's wonderful comment on the words “pissetolle” and “taye” in this communication, has been already published, but will bear repetition:—

“Perhaps,” he wrote with his own hand, “‘pissetolle’ is some kind of knife, and ‘taye,’ I don't know if it can be anything else than head, which is not ‘taye,’ but ‘tete’ or ‘teyte,’ as you know.”

“Quizá es alguna manera de cuchillo, y la taye no sé si podría ser otra coza que cabeza, qui no es taye, sino tete, o teyte, como sabreya.”

leader of the Huguenots was a philosopher, who in the days of St. Bartholomew had become orthodox to save his life, and who was already "instructing himself" anew in order to secure his crown. Philip was used to deal with fanatics, and had often been opposed by a religious bigotry as fierce as his own ; but he might perhaps be baffled by a good-humoured free-thinker, who was to teach him a lesson in political theology of which he had never dreamed.

The Leaguers were not long in doubt as to the meaning of "instruction," and they were thoroughly persuaded that—so soon as Henry IV. should reconcile himself with Rome—their game was likely to become desperate.

Nevertheless prudent Philip sat in his elbow-chair, writing his apostilles, improving himself and his secretaries in orthography, but chiefly confining his attention to the affairs of France. The departed Mucio's brother Mayenne was installed as chief stipendiary of Spain and lieutenant-general for the League in France, until Philip should determine within himself in what form to assume the sovereignty of that kingdom. It might be questionable however whether that corpulent Duke, who spent more time in eating than Henry IV. did in sleeping, and was longer in reading a letter than Henry in winning a battle, were likely to prove a very dangerous rival—even with all Spain at his back—to the lively Béarnese. But time would necessarily be consumed before the end was reached, and time and Philip were two. Henry of Navarre and France was ready to open his ears to instruction ; but even he had declared, several years before, that "a religion was not to be changed like a shirt." So while the fresh garment was airing for him at Rome, and while he was leisurely stripping off the old, he might perhaps be taken at a disadvantage. Fanaticism on both sides, during this process of instruction, might be roused. The Huguenots on their part might denounce the treason of their great chief, and the Papists, on theirs, howl at the hypocrisy of the pretended conversion. But Henry IV. had philosophically prepared himself for the denunciations of the Protestants, while determined to protect

them against the persecutions of the Romanism to which he meant to give his adhesion. While accepting the title of renegade, together with an undisputed crown, he was not the man to rekindle those fires of religious bigotry which it was his task to quench, now that they had lighted his way to the throne. The demands of his Catholic supporters for the exclusion from the kingdom of all religions but their own, were steadily refused.¹

And thus the events of 1588 and 1589 indicated that the great game of despotism against freedom would be played, in the coming years, upon the soil of France. Already Elizabeth had furnished the new King with 22,000*l.* in gold—a larger sum, as he observed, than he had ever seen before in his life,² and the States of the Netherlands had provided him with as much more.³ Willoughby too, and tough Roger Williams, and Baskerville, and Umpton, and Vere, with 4000 English pikemen at their back, had already made a brief but spirited campaign in France;⁴ and the Duke of Parma, after recruiting his health, so far as it was possible, at Spa, was preparing himself to measure swords with that great captain of Huguenots, who now assumed the crown of his ancestors, upon the same ground. It seemed probable that for the coming years England would be safe from Spanish invasion, and that Holland would have a better opportunity than it had ever enjoyed before of securing its liberty and perfecting its political organization. While Parma, Philip, and Mayenne were fighting the Béarnese for the crown of France, there might be a fairer field for the new commonwealth of the United Netherlands.

And thus many of the personages who have figured in these volumes have already passed away. Leicester had died just after the defeat of the Armada, and the thrifty Queen, while dropping a tear upon the grave of 'sweet Robin,' had sold his goods at auction to defray his debts to herself; and Moeurs,

¹ De Thou, X. l. 89, pp. 270, 680. Péréfixe, 80, 96. 'L'Etoile,' 258, 291.

² Camden, IV. 436.

³ Bodley to Burghley, 20 Aug.

1589. (Br. Mus. Galba, D. iv. p. 65 MS.)

⁴ Camden, *ubi sup.*

and Martin Schenk, and 'Mucio,' and Henry III., and Catharine de' Medici, were all dead. But Philip the Prudent remained, and Elizabeth of England, and Henry of France and Navarre, and John of Olden-Barneveld; and there was still another personage, a very young man still, but a deep-thinking, hard-working student, fagging steadily at mathematics and deep in the works of Stevinus, who, before long, might play a conspicuous part in the world's great drama. But, previously to 1590, Maurice of Nassau seemed comparatively insignificant, and he could be spoken of by courtiers as a cipher, and as an unmannerly boy just let loose from school.

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